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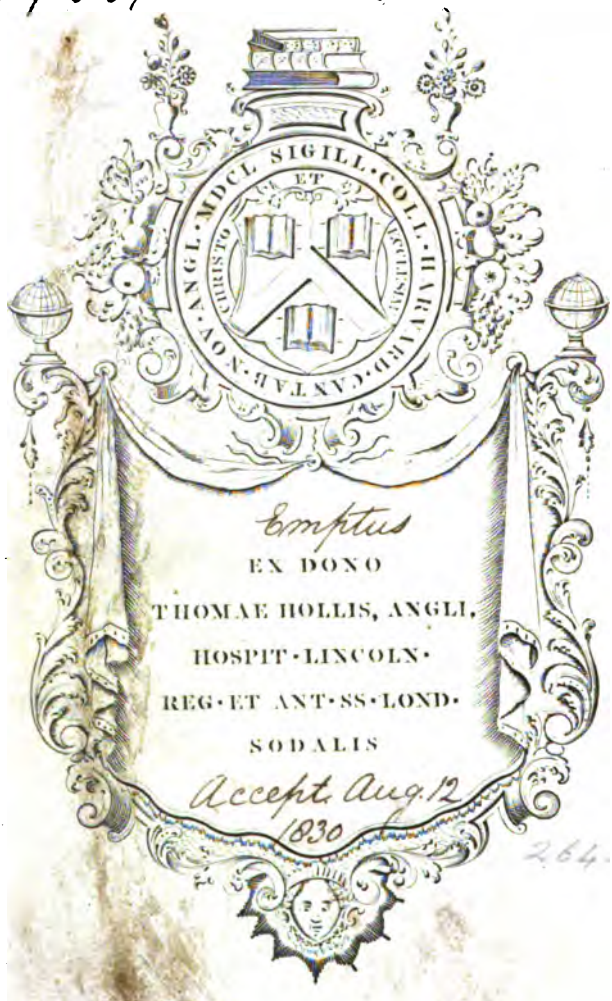

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Plate I.

Fig. 1. T

Fig. 2. C

Fig. 3. D

Fig. 4. T

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Rec.d Aug. 12, 1805.

REPORT

OF THE

COMMITTEE OF THE HIGHLAND SOCIETY

OF

SCOTLAND,

APPOINTED TO INQUIRE INTO THE NATURE AND AUTHENTICITY OF THE

POEMS OF OSSIAN.

DRAWN UP, ACCORDING TO THE DIRECTIONS OF THE COMMITTEE,

BY

HENRY MACKENZIE, Esq.

ITS CONVENER OR CHAIRMAN.

WITH A

COPIOUS APPENDIX,

CONTAINING SOME OF THE PRINCIPAL DOCUMENTS ON WHICH THE REPORT IS FOUNDED.

EDINBURGH:

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1805.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Committee takes this opportunity of returning its thanks to the various gentlemen who have contributed information, manuſcripts, or other documents, with regard to the object of its inquiries.

It hopes it may, without offence to others, particularly mention the names of the Reverend Mr Anderſon of Kinguſſie, the Reverend Mr M'Laggan of Blair, the Reverend Mr M'Diarmed of Weem, the Reverend Dr Smith of Campbelton, the Reverend Mr M'Donald of Anſtruther, the Reverend Mr Irvine of Rannoch, Captain Morriſon of Greenock, Mr George Chalmers of London, Major M'Lachlan of Kilbride, the Reverend Mr Stuart of Craigniſh, and the Reverend Mr M'Leod of Harries, as thoſe from whom the moſt important materials were obtained *. Several members of the Committee itſelf had opportunities of affording MSS. and other

* The late learned Mr M'Farlane of London, and Mr Gallie, miniſter of Kincardine, in Roſsſhire, are not now alive to receive the acknowledgments of the Committee.

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other materials of importance, particularly Lord Bannatyne, Sir George M'Kenzie, Sir John Sinclair, and Mr M'Donald of Staffa. To Dr Donald Smith, late ſurgeon to the Breadalbane Fencibles, one of the beſt Celtic ſcholars of the preſent time, the Committee would endeavour to expreſs its obligation, were not its thanks rendered unneceſſary by thoſe of the Society itſelf, voted to that gentleman, in a manner moſt juſtly due to the ability and unwearied attention with which he has aſſiſted the Committee in the progreſs of this buſineſs; an aſſiſtance, without which, its Report could never have been compleated.

The Committee, unwilling to lengthen the Appendix to this Report, which it fears will to moſt of its readers appear already too long, has given only ſpecimens or extracts of ſuch documents as it appeared to the Committee might fairly be judged of by ſuch ſpecimens or extracts; but the papers themſelves are open to the inſpection of any perſon wiſhing to examine them more thoroughly, who will take the trouble of applying to the Committee for that purpoſe.

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TO THE

HIGHLAND SOCIETY

OF

SCOTLAND.

THE

REPORT, &c.

In execution of the buſineſs aſſigned it, your Committee conceived it to be foreign to its duty to enter into any elaborate argument or diſcuſſion on the authenticity of thoſe poems, or to examine, with critical or hiſtorical labour, the opinions of different writers who have made this matter a ſubject of controverſy. It conceived the purpoſe of its nomination to be, to employ the influence of the Society, and the extenſive communication which it poſſeſſes with every part of the Highlands, in collecting what materials or information it was ſtill practicable to collect, regarding the authenticity and nature of the poems aſcribed to Oſſian, and particularly of that celebrated collection publiſhed by Mr James Macpherſon.

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For the purpoſe above mentioned, the Committee, ſoon after its appointment, circulated the following ſet of Queries, through ſuch parts of the Highlands and Iſlands, and among ſuch perſons reſident there, as ſeemed moſt likely to afford the information required.

QUERIES.

I. HAVE you ever heard repeated or ſung, any of the poems aſcribed to Oſſian, tranſlated and publiſhed by Mr Macpherſon? By whom have you heard them ſo repeated, and at what time or times? Did you ever commit any of them to writing, or can you remember them ſo well as now to ſet them down? In either of theſe caſes, be ſo good to ſend the Gaelic original to the Committee.

II. The ſame anſwer is requeſted concerning any other ancient poems of the ſame kind, and relating to the ſame traditionary perſons or ſtories with thoſe in Mr Macpherſon's collection.

III. Are any of the perſons, from whom you heard any ſuch poems, now alive? Or are there, in your part of the country, any perſons who remember and can repeat or recite ſuch poems? If there are, be ſo good to examine them as to the manner of their getting or learning ſuch compoſitions; and ſet down, as accurately as poſſible, ſuch as they can now repeat or recite; and tranſmit ſuch their account, and ſuch compoſitions as they repeat, to the Committee.

IV.

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IV. If there are, in your neighbourhood, any perſons from whom Mr Macpherſon received any poems, inquire particularly what the poems were which he ſo received, the manner in which he received them, and how he wrote them down; ſhew thoſe perſons, if you have an opportunity, his tranſlation of ſuch poems, and deſire them to ſay if the tranſlation is exact and literal; or, if it differs, in what it differs from the poems, as they repeated them to Mr Macpherſon, and can now recollect them.

V. Be ſo good to procure every information you conveniently can, with regard to the traditionary belief, in the country in which you live, concerning the hiſtory of Fingal and his followers, and that of Oſſian and his poems; particularly concerning thoſe ſtories and poems publiſhed by Mr Macpherſon, and the heroes mentioned in them. Tranſmit any ſuch account, and any proverbial or traditionary expreſſion in the original Gaelic, relating to the ſubject, to the Committee.

VI. In all the above inquiries, or any that may occur to in elucidation of this ſubject, he is requeſted by the Committee to make the inquiry, and to take down the anſwers, with as much impartiality and preciſion as poſſible, in the ſame manner as if it were a legal queſtion, and the proof to be inveſtigated with a legal ſtrictneſs.

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When Dr Blair, in 1763, wrote his diſſertation on the poems of Oſſian, he propoſed to accompany it with certain documents in ſupport of the authenticity of theſe poems. It appears that he had applyed to his celebrated friend, Mr David Hume, for his opinion as to what ſhould be the nature of the evidence he ſhould endeavour to obtain on that ſubject. In anſwer to this requeſt, Mr Hume wrote the following letters, which, notwithſtanding their value to the reader, the Committee ſhould have felt ſome ſcruples againſt inſerting here, if they had not already appeared in another publication.

COPY OF A LETTER FROM DAVID HUME, ESQ. TO THE REVEREND DR HUGH BLAIR, ON THE SUBJECT OF OSSIAN'S POEMS.

Liſle Street, Leicester Fields,
19th Septem. 1763.

Dear Sir,

I live in a place where I have the pleaſure of frequently hearing juſtice done to your diſſertation, but never heard it mentioned in a company, where ſome one perſon or other did not expreſs his doubts with regard to the authenticity of the poems which are its ſubject, and I often hear them totally rejected, with diſdain and indignation, as a palpable and moſt impudent forgery. This opinion

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nion has indeed become very prevalent among the men of letters in London; and I can foreſee, that in a few years, the poems, if they continue to ſtand on their preſent footing, will be thrown aſide, and will fall into final oblivion. It is in vain to ſay that their beauty will ſupport them, independent of their authenticity: No; that beauty is not ſo much to the general taſte, as to inſure you of this event; and if people be once diſguſted with the idea of a forgery, they are thence apt to entertain a more diſadvantageous notion of the excellency of the production itſelf. The abſurd pride and caprice of Macpherſon himſelf, who ſcorns, as he pretends, to ſatisfy any body that doubts his veracity, has tended much to confirm this general ſcepticiſm; and I muſt own, for my own part, that though I have had many particular reaſons to believe theſe poems genuine, more than it is poſſible for any Engliſhman of letters to have, yet I am not entirely without my ſcruples on that head. You think that the internal proofs in favour of the poems are very convincing: So they are; but there are alſo internal reaſons againſt them, particularly from the manners, notwithſtanding all the art with which you have endeavoured to throw a verniſh * on that circumſtance; and the preſervation of ſuch long and ſuch connected poems, by oral tradition alone, during a courſe of fourteen centuries, is ſo much out of the ordi-

* So in MS.

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nary courſe of human affairs, that it requires the ſtrongeſt reaſons to make us believe it. My preſent purpoſe therefore is, to apply to you, in the name of all the men of letters of this, and I may ſay of all other countries, to eſtabliſh this capital point, and to give us proofs that theſe poems are, I do not ſay ſo antient as the age of Severus, but that they were not forged within theſe five years by James Macpherſon. Theſe proofs muſt not be arguments, but teſtimonies: Peoples ears are fortified againſt the former; the latter may yet find their way, before the poems are conſigned to total oblivion. Now the teſtimonies may, in my opinion, be of two kinds. Macpherſon pretends that there is an ancient manuſcript of part of Fingal in the family I think of Clanronald. Get that fact aſcertained by more than one perſon of credit; let theſe perſons be acquainted with the Gaelic; let them compare the original and the tranſlation; and let them teſtify the fidelity of the latter.

But the chief point in which it will be neceſſary for you to exert yourſelf will be, to get poſitive teſtimony from many different hands, that ſuch poems are vulgarly recited in the Highlands, and have there long been the entertainment of the people. This teſtimony muſt be as particular as it is poſitive. It will not be ſufficient that a Highland gentleman or clergyman ſay or write to you that he has heard ſuch poems: nobody queſtions that there are traditional poems in that part of the country, where the names of Oſſian and Fingal, and Oſcar and Gaul,

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are mentioned in every ſtanza. The only doubt is, whether theſe poems have any farther reſemblance to the poems publiſhed by Macpherſon. I was told by Bourke, * a very ingenious Iriſh gentleman, the author of a tract on the Sublime and Beautiful, that on the firſt publication of Macpherſon's book, all the Iriſh cried out, *We know all those poems; we have always heard them from our infancy;* but when he aſked more particular queſtions, he could never learn that any one had ever heard or could repeat the original of any one paragraph of the pretended tranſlation. This generality, then, muſt be carefully guarded againſt, as being of no authority.

Your connections among your brethren of the clergy may here be of great uſe to you. You may eaſily learn the names of all miniſters of that country who underſtand the language of it. You may write to them, expreſſing the doubts that have ariſen, and deſiring them to ſend for ſuch of the bards as remain, and make them rehearſe their ancient poems. Let the clergymen then have the tranſlation in their hands, and let them write back to you, and inform you that they heard ſuch a one (naming him), living in ſuch a place, rehearſe the original of ſuch a paſſage, from ſuch a page to ſuch a page of the Engliſh tranſlation, which appeared exact and faithful. If you give to the public a ſufficient number of ſuch teſtimonies, you may prevail; But I venture to foretel to you that nothing leſs will ſerve the pur-

* So in MS.

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poſe; nothing leſs will ſo much as command the attention of the public.

Becket tells me that he is to give us a new edition of your Diſſertation, accompanied with ſome remarks on *Temora*. Here is a favourable opportunity for you to execute this purpoſe. You have a juſt and laudable zeal for the credit of theſe poems. They are, if genuine, one of the greateſt curioſities in all reſpects, that ever was diſcovered in the commonwealth of letters; and the child is, in a manner, become yours by adoption, as Macpherſon has totally abandoned all care of it. Theſe motives call upon you to exert yourſelf, and I think it were ſuitable to your candour, and moſt ſatisfactory alſo to the reader, to publiſh all the anſwers to all the letters you write, even though ſome of theſe letters ſhould make ſomewhat againſt your own opinion in this affair. We ſhall always be the more aſſured that no arguments are ſtrained beyond their proper force, and no contrary arguments ſuppreſſed, where ſuch an entire communication is made to us. Becket joins me heartily in this application; and he owns to me, that the believers in the authenticity of the poems diminiſh every day among the men of ſenſe and reflection. Nothing leſs than what I propoſe can throw the balance on the other ſide. I depart from hence in about three weeks, and ſhould be glad to hear your reſolution before that time.

COPY

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COPY OF ANOTHER LETTER FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR SIR,

I am very glad you have undertaken the talk which I uſed the freedom to recommend to you. Nothing leſs than what you propoſe will ſerve the purpoſe. You need expect no aſſiſtance from Macpherſon, who flew into a paſſion when I told him of the letter I had wrote to you: But you muſt not mind ſo ſtrange and heteroclite a mortal, than whom I have ſcarce ever known a man more perverſe and unamiable. He will probably depart for Florida with Governor Johnſtone, and I would adviſe him to travel among the Chickiſaws or Cherokees, in order to tame him and civilize him.

I ſhould be much pleaſed to hear of the ſucceſs of your labours. Your method of directing to me is under cover to the Earl of Hertford, Northumberland Houſe. Any letters that come to me under that direction, will be ſent over to me at Paris.

I have no preſent thoughts of publiſhing the work you mention; but when I do, I hope you have no objection of my dedicating it to you.

I beg my compliments to Robertſon and Jardine. I am very ſorry to hear of the ſtate of Ferguſſon's health. John Home went to the country yeſterday with Lord Bute. I was introduced the other day to that

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that Noble Lord, at his desire. I believe him a very good man; a better man than a politician.

Since writing the above, I have been in company with Mrs Montague, a lady of great distinction in this place, and a zealous partizan of Ossian. I told her of your intention, and even used the freedom to read your letter to her. She was extremely pleased with your project; and the rather, as the Duc de Nivernois, she said, had talked to her much on that subject last winter, and desired, if possible, to get collected some proofs of the authenticity of these poems, which he proposed to lay before the Academie de Belle Lettres at Paris. You see, then, that you are upon a great stage in this inquiry, and that many people have their eyes upon you. This is a new motive for rendering your proofs as complete as possible. I cannot conceive any objection which a man even of the gravest character could have to your publication of his letters, which will only attest a plain fact known to him. Such scruples, if they occur, you must endeavour to remove; for on this trial of yours will the judgment of the public finally depend.

Lord Bath, who was in the company, agreed with me, that such documents of authenticity are entirely necessary and indispensable.

Please to write to me as soon as you make any advances, that I may have something to say on this subject to the literati of Paris. I beg my compliments to all those who bear that character at Edinburgh.

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burgh. I cannot but look upon all of them as my friends. I am,

Yours ſincerely,

DAVID HUME.

6th October 1763.

I depart hence in eight days.

It is flattering to the Committee, that the line of conduct here chalked out for the Doctor by his illuſtrious friend, is not diſſimilar to that which, without the advantage of knowing Mr Hume's advice to Dr Blair, the Committee followed, when it publiſhed and circulated the ſet of queries, of which a copy is given above.

Dr Blair, whether in purſuance of Mr Hume's advice, or from his own previous determination on the ſubject, procured from a variety of correſpondents, chiefly clergymen in the Highlands, letters, ſetting forth what they knew or believed with regard to this matter. Theſe letters one of Dr Blair's executors has been ſo obliging as to put into the hands of the Committee, and the moſt material of them will be found in the Appendix, NO. I. Among thoſe, the Committee recommends to the attention of the Society the letter from Sir James M'Donald, (a name of the higheſt authority in any literary queſtion), App. p. 3.; thoſe from Dr John Macpherſon, App. p. 5. & 9.; and that from Mr Angus M'Neill, miniſter of Hopemore, App. p. 18.

Several individuals of the Committee, as well as other members of the Society who occaſionally attended

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tended its meetings, were obliging enough to correſpond with their friends and acquaintance in the Highlands, on the ſubject of its inquiry, in order to procure from them ſuch facts and documents as their ſituations afforded opportunity of knowing or collecting, with regard to the poems in queſtion.

The reſult of ſuch inquiries, correſpondence and information, the Committee is now to ſubmit to the Society, ſhortly ſtating what it ſuppoſes to be the general produce of its reſearch, and ſubjoining in an Appendix ſome of the moſt remarkable of thoſe documents from which its information was drawn, or on which its opinions are founded.

Previouſly to this ſtatement, the Committee muſt take the liberty of mentioning ſome difficulties under which it laboured, in the courſe of this inveſtigation. It was early foreſeen that ſuch difficulties muſt ariſe, from the change of manners in the Highlands, where the habits of induſtry have now ſuperſeded the amuſement of liſtening to the legendary narrative or heroic ballad, where conſequently the faculty of remembering, and the exerciſe of repeating ſuch tales or ſongs, are altogether in diſuſe, or only retained by a few perſons of extremely advanced age and feeble health, whom, in thoſe diſtant parts of the country, where communication and intercourſe is, from many local cauſes, very difficult and tedious), it is not eaſy to diſcover, or when they are diſcovered, to receive or to get tranſmitted the information they can give; for though the Gaelic or Erſe (as it is vulgary called) is the ſpoken language of thoſe diſtricts,

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yet writing it is an art confined to very few. The perſon, therefore, who relates or recites, can only communicate his relation or recital to thoſe who are preſent with him at the time, and theſe can only tranſmit it to their correſpondents, if ſome one among them can write it down from the mouth of the reciter. Such was not the caſe about the middle of the late century, when the attention of Government was firſt particularly called to the cultivation of that country, or even before the ſeven years war, when the exertions of individuals were ſtrongly pointed to the ſame object. Such attention and exertions were directed to attainments much more important indeed, but in their nature unfavourable to a regard for, or preſervation of the ancient poetry of the Highlands. Before thoſe periods, the recitation of that poetry was the univerſal amuſement of every winter fire-ſide, and almoſt every perſon, either of a ſtudious diſpoſition or with any tolerable opportunity of inſtruction, was in the practice of reading and writing Gaelic.

Beſides this difficulty, which every one at all converſant with the Highlands had anticipated, the Committee met with others which it had not ſo eaſily foreſeen. Perſons in thoſe remote ſituations, and in that rank of life in which muſt neceſſarily be found the greater number of thoſe to whom the Committee was to apply for information on this ſubject, do not eaſily comprehend the nature of evidence, particularly on matters which themſelves have always implicitly believed. Dr Johnſon has ſomewhere

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where ſaid, "That a man does not like to have his creed diſturbed at threeſcore." The men to whom the inquiries of the Committee were addreſſed, had generally long paſſed that period of life, and the traditionary hiſtories and poetry of their fathers were, in their belief, of ſuch indiſputable authenticity as it was needleſs to inquire into, and it rather offended them to doubt. Such of them as this idea did not prevent from anſwering the Committee's inquiries, frequently anſwered them in a manner which a man naturally enough adopts, who is unuſed to diſcuſſion or diſpute, and who does not think it neceſſary to ſuit his information to a ſcepticiſm of which he never dreamed himſelf, and which he hardly conceives it poſſible for others to entertain. *

From this circumſtance, the correſpondence of the Committee, (which the diſtant reſidence of many of its correſpondents, and the irregularity of the conveyance of letters to and from thoſe remote diſtricts, muſt at any rate have ſubjected to great delay), was rendered much more dilatory and difficult than can well be conceived by perſons who have not had

* The Committee thinks it may not be unintereſting to the Society to read the opinion of a native Highlander, uninſtructed in the literature, and even ignorant of the language of any other country, of the queſtion which he heard was agitated with regard to the authenticity of Oſſian's poems. It is given in the original Gaelic, as delivered by Hugh M'Donald, tackſman of Kilpheder, in the iſland of Uiſt, with a tranſlation as literal as a right underſtanding of its meaning will allow. *Vid.* Appendix, No. II.

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had occaſion to inquire into ſuch ſubjects, under ſuch diſadvantages, with an anxiety perfectly to underſtand, and ſcrupulouſly to report the meaning of their correſpondents.

In conducting this inquiry, the Committee wiſhed to be guided not only by the ſtricteſt impartiality, but by a feeling of ſcrupulous delicacy towards every perſon whoſe name or character was in any degree implicated in the ſubject. The Committee wiſhed to conduct its inquiries, and to frame its report, in a manner as *impersonal* as poſſible. It has been, however, under the abſolute neceſſity of mentioning the names of ſome individuals, and of producing ſome documents relative to the character and diſpoſition, as well as the ſituation of Mr James Macpherſon, and of a few other perſons intimately connected with the matter of its inveſtigation. The Committee hopes, that in ſuch unavoidable notice of individuals, it has obſerved every poſſible delicacy. The Committee feels it a duty to ſpeak of every one with moderation and with diffidence, but eſpecially of thoſe who are no more; although "de mortuis nil niſi bonum" is a falſe maxim in criticiſm, as well as in hiſtory; yet it is ſafe, as well as candid, to ſpeak with caution of the actions and motives of thoſe who cannot now be queſtioned as to their actions or motives; who cannot now explain what is doubtful, or account for what ſeems contradictory.

The Committee preſumes it may aſſume as undiſputed, that a traditionary hiſtory of a great hero or chief, called *Fion*, *Fien na Gael*, or, as it is modernized

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ized, *Fingal*, exists, and has immemorially existed in the Highlands and islands of Scotland, and that certain poems or ballads, containing the exploits of him and his associate heroes, were the favourite lore of the natives of those districts. The general belief of the existence of such heroic personages, and of the great poet *Ossian*, the son of Fingal, by whom their exploits were sung, is as universal in the Highlands as the belief of any ancient fact whatsoever. It is recorded in proverbs, which pass through all ranks and conditions of men. *Ossian dall*, blind Ossian, is a person as well known as strong Sampson or wise Solomon. The very boys in their sports cry out for fair play, *Cothram na feine*, the equal combat of the Fingalians. Ossian, "*an deigh nam fiann*," Ossian, the last of his race, is proverbial, to signify a man who has had the misfortune to survive his kindred; and servants returning from a fair or wedding, were in use to describe the beauty of young women whom they had seen there, by the words, "*Tha i cho boidheach reh Agandecca, nighean ant sneachda*," She is as beautiful as Agandecca, daughter of the snow. This is one of those general and well known facts, which it is believed no one will contest, however much he may be disposed to doubt the authenticity of the poems published as the composition of Ossian the son of Fingal. To give, however, an idea of the general impression and delight which the recital of those poems or ballads produced among the inhabitants of the Highlands, the Committee may quote the following sentence from

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a book not much known, and ſomewhat difficult to procure, the tranſlation of the Forms of Prayer, and Adminiſtration of the Sacraments, and Catechiſm of the Chriſtian Religion, as uſed in the reformed Church of Scotland, into Gaelic, by Biſhop Carſwell, printed at Edinburgh in the year 1567.

In his preface or introduction, the biſhop laments and reproves the preference which the Highlanders give to their ancient ballads over ſuch Godly books as that he was about to publiſh.

'But there is one great diſadvantage which we 'the Gaeil of Scotland and Ireland labour under, 'beyond the reſt of the world, that our Gaelic 'language has never yet been printed, as the lan-'guage of every other race of men has been: 'And we labour under a diſadvantage which is 'ſtill greater than every other diſadvantage, that 'we have not the Holy Bible printed in Gaelic, as 'it has been printed in Latin and in Engliſh, and 'in every other language; and alſo, that we have 'never yet had any account printed of the anti-'quities of our country, or of our anceſtors; for 'though we have ſome accounts of the Gaeil of 'Scotland and Ireland, contained in manuſcripts, 'and in the genealogies of bards and hiſtoriogra-'phers, yet there is great labour in writing them 'over with the hand, whereas the work which is 'printed, be it ever ſo great, is ſpeedily finiſhed. 'And great is the blindneſs and ſinful darkneſs, 'and ignorance and evil deſign of ſuch as teach, 'and write, and cultivate the Gaelic language,

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'that, with the view of obtaining for themſelves the 'vain rewards of this world, they are more deſir- 'ous, and more accuſtomed to compoſe vain, tempt- 'ing, lying worldly hiſtories, concerning the *Tua- 'tha de dannan*, and concerning warriors and cham- 'pions, and Fingal the ſon of Cumhall, with his 'heroes, and concerning many others which I will 'not at preſent enumerate or mention, in order to 'maintain or reprove, than to write and teach, and 'maintain the faithful words of God, and of the 'perfect way of truth.'

But the queſtion remaining for the inquiry of the Committee was the nature of that genuine poetry which the Highlanders uſed then to repeat and to admire? and how far what, in later times, has been given to the world, correſponds with that genuine ancient poetry? if any, and what additions or alterations have been made? or if a new and more refined poetry, founded on the traditionary materials current over the Highlands, has been ſubſtituted in the room of the ancient and original compoſitions? In purſuing this inquiry, and in laying its reſult before the Society, the Committee has thought the moſt ſatisfactory method would be, to give firſt an account of the collections made by perſons who have ſucceſſively been engaged in collecting the ancient poetry of the Highlands; and 2dly, of what the Committee itſelf had been able to procure of the ſame ſpecies of compoſition. But before entering into this detailed account, it may be proper for the Committee to premiſe a few obſervations on the general,

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general, and indeed the only practicable mode of collecting ancient Highland poetry, let the ſkill and induſtry of the collector be what they may.

On examining into the poems, or fragments of poems, which the Committee has procured, and which indeed are common in the Highlands, it has been uniformly found, that many different editions or copies (if that phraſe may be allowed to ſuit recitation as well as writing) of poems, bearing the ſame, or nearly the ſame title, exiſt and are preſerved, whether in memory or in manuſcript; by a careful and well informed collection of which, the moſt perfect piece may be found. This is the common and legitimate method of obtaining what it is fair to denominate authentic copies of all genuine traditionary poetry, and muſt neceſſarily be followed with regard to compoſitions which had never been fixed by publication, but floated either in various and often incorrect written copies, or much more frequently in the oral recitation of ſenachies or bards, or of ſtill more illiterate perſons, who repeated, for the amuſement of others, what they had liſtened to merely for their own. The Committee has received ſeveral copies of various poems, of more or leſs merit, which, though known and recited under ſimilar titles, differ conſiderably in detail, in words, lines or paſſages, probably as the memory of the reciter was more or leſs accurate, or ſometimes as his underſtanding of the ancient language, or his comprehenſion of the figures or imagery it conveyed, was more or leſs perfect.

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This advantage of collation of various editions (the Committee uſes the term merely in the ſenſe above mentioned) of the ſame poems, muſt have been very great at a period 30 or 40 years back, when, as has been before ſtated, copies were much more frequent, and when the number of perſons who could recite the tales and poetry, and who could write the language of the Highlands, was very much greater than at the preſent time.

The above quoted paſſage from Dr Carſwell ſufficiently ſpeaks the delight which the Highlanders themſelves experienced from their ancient traditionary tales and poems. That the poems themſelves did not make their way into other more cultivated parts of Great Britain or of Europe, may perhaps be accounted for from the ſtate of thoſe diſtricts of Scotland where they were chiefly known, and indeed it may be ſaid of Scotland in general, till a very recent period. Men were occupied in purſuits of a kind very unfavourable to the cultivation of letters, and by the few who did cultivate them, a language which was conſidered as the barbarous dialect of a barbarous people would not be choſen for the ſubject of their ſtudies, or for the labour of tranſlation. While the Church was the guide, and almoſt the ſole depoſitary of letters, ſhe made it a point of religious duty to diſcourage (it would appear with but indifferent ſucceſs) the peruſal or the hearing of thoſe poems among the Highlanders, but ſhe had it much more in her power to prevent their becoming a part of the literature of the country. It appears, accordingly,

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cordingly, that though the names of Fion, Oſſian, and Gaul the ſon of Morni *, were well known even

* See the *Bruce*, by John Barbour, publiſhed from a MS. dated 1489, by J. Pinkerton. London, 1790. Buke 3. l. 61. 90.

'Quhen that the Lord of Lorn ſaw
Hys men ſtand off him ane ſik aw,
That thai durſt not follow the chaſs
Rycht angry in his hert he was;
And for wondyr that he ſuld ſwa
Stot them, hym ane but ma,
He ſaid, methink MARTHOKY's ſon,
Right as *Gol Mak Morn* was won,
To haiff fra Fyngal his menyie,
Rycht ſwa all hys fra us has he.'

In Kirk's edition of the Pſalms of David in Gaelic, publiſhed at Edinburgh in 1684, the following is the author's addreſs to his book.

'Imthigh a Dhuilleachain gu dán,
Le dán glan diagha duiſg iad thall,
Cuir fáilte ar fonn fial nab fionn
Ar gharbh chriocha is Inſeabh Gall.'

That is,

'Little volume go boldly forth,
Rouſe whom you reach to pure and Godly ſtrains:
Hail the generous land of Fingal's heroes,
The Highland tracts and Iſles of Hebrides.'

William Dunbar, in the 'Interlude of the Droichis.' Evergreen, p. 259. ſt. 3.

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even in the Lowlands of Scotland, the poems or traditionary tales that related their exploits were not objects of curiosity in that part of the country, and neither the antiquarian nor the scholar ever thought of

'My foir grandsyr hecht Fyn Makowll,
That dang the Deil and gart him yowll.'

And again, p. 261. st, 9.

'My fader, meikle Gow Macmorn,
Out of his moderis wame was shorne.'

Lord Hailes, with his usual acuteness and ingenuity, has observed the coincidence between this circumstance of Fingal's 'dinging the deil and garing him yowl,' mentioned by Dunbar, and that of his contest with the spirit of Loda, contained in one of the poems translated by Macpherson.

The following passage is of a graver sort, taken from Hector Boethius.

'Conficiunt quidam in hæc tempora Fynnanum filium Cœli, (Fyn Mak Coul, vulgari vocabulo) virum uti ferunt immani statura (septenum enim cubitorum hominem fuisse narrant) Scotici sanguinis, venatoria arte insignem, omnibusque insolita corporis mole formidolosum; Circularibus fabulis, et iis quæ de Arthuro rege passim apud nostrates leguntur, similimis, magis quam eruditorum testimonio, *decantatum*. Hujus itaque viri mirabilibus quod ab historica fide haud parum abhorrere omnibus sunt visa, consulto supersedentes, Eugenii regis gesta deinceps prosequemur.' *Hector. Boethii Scot. Histor.* L. 7. p. 128-9. Fol. Par. 1574.

This, and the other authorities above quoted, give Fingal and his heroes decidedly to Scotland; others, such as Gavin Douglas, speak of them as

'Greit Gow Macmorne and Fyn Mac Coul, and how
They suld be gods in Ireland, as they say.'

Without

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of making any tranſlations of them into Engliſh. The firſt who ſeems to have conceived ſuch an idea was a young man, to whom the Gaelic was an acquired language, (who, from that very circumſtance, perhaps prized more what compoſitions he found in it), *Jerome Stone* of Dunkeld, who it appears had been at pains to collect ſeveral of the ancient poems of the Highlands, of one of which, as a ſpecimen, he publiſhed a tranſlation in rhyme, in the *Scots Magazine*, then the only periodical publication in Scotland, for the month of January 1756, along with a ſhort letter, addreſſed to the editor of the Magazine, which ſufficiently indicates his opinion of the poetical merit of thoſe poems. Stone, then only 20 or 21, in an obſcure ſituation, and with few opportunities of cultivating his native genius or talents, could not be ſuppoſed capable of giving a very happy or impreſſive tranſlation of Gaelic poetry, eſpecially when fettered with rhyme, which, even in the ableſt hands, and thoſe moſt accuſtomed to the conſtruction of Engliſh verſe, affords always an unfaithful, and generally an imperfect tranſcript of ancient poetry. His place of reſidence too, was unfavourable, either to the acquirement of pure Gaelic, or the collection of the beſt copies of the ancient poetry of the Highlands.

Without entering, however, into the diſpute as to Fingal's origin or kingdom, the Committee may here obſerve, that Scotland and Ireland had anciently ſuch conſtant communication and intercourſe, as to be conſidered almoſt one country; and their poetical language is nearly, or rather altogether the ſame.

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It was unlucky that Stone did not think of giving his originals to the public; but Mr Chalmers of London, whoſe diligence and acuteneſs as an antiquarian are ſufficiently known, happened to purchaſe at a ſale a parcel of books and writings which once belonged to Jerome Stone. Part of thoſe MSS. appears to conſiſt of copies of ſome of the original Highland poetry which Stone had collected; and Mr Chalmers having, with his accuſtomed liberality and zeal to promote literary inquiry, communicated them to this Committee, the original of Stone's tranſlation, along with the tranſlation itſelf, are given in the Appendix, NO. 7; but his letter to the editor of the Magazine, which the Committee conſiders as one of uncommon excellence, when the period of its being written is conſidered, the Committee takes the liberty of ſubjoining here.

TO THE AUTHOR OF THE SCOTS MAGAZINE.

SIR, *Dunkeld, Nov. 15th, 1755.*

Thoſe who have any tolerable acquaintance with the Iriſh language muſt know that there are a great number of poetical compoſitions in it, and ſome of them of very great antiquity, whoſe merit entitles them to an exemption from the unfortunate neglect, or rather abhorrence, to which ignorance has ſubjected that emphatic language in which they

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were compoſed. Several of theſe performances are to be met with, which, for ſublimity of ſentiment, nervouſneſs of expreſſion, and high ſpirited metaphor, are hardly to be equalled among the chief productions of the moſt cultivated nations. Others of them breathe ſuch tenderneſs and ſimplicity, as muſt be affecting to every mind that is in the leaſt tinctured with the ſofter paſſions of pity and humanity. Of this kind is the poem of which I here ſend you a tranſlation. Your learned readers will eaſily diſcover the conformity there is betwixt the tale upon which it is built, and the ſtory of Bellerophon, as related by Homer; while it will be no ſmall gratification to the curioſity of ſome, to ſee the different manner in which a ſubject of the ſame nature is handled by the great father of poetry and a Highland bard. It is hoped the uncommon turn of ſeveral expreſſions, and the ſeeming extravagance there is in ſome of the compariſons I have preſerved in the tranſlation, will give no offence to ſuch perſons as can form a juſt notion of thoſe compoſitions, which are the productions of ſimple and unaſſiſted genius, in which energy is always more ſought after than neatneſs, and the ſtrictneſs of connexion leſs adverted to than the deſign of moving the paſſions and affecting the heart. I am, &c.

About the ſame time Mr *Pope*, miniſter of Reay in Caithneſs, well known for his abilities as a ſcholar, and his great knowledge of the Gaelic language, had thoughts of making a collection of the ancient poetry

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poetry of the Highlands, in concert with another gentleman of equal knowledge in their language, and with ſtill better opportunities, from his ſituation, of collecting the beſt that remained. Mr Pope's own account of this propoſed undertaking will be found in a letter to Dr Blair, contained in the Appendix, No. 3.

The next collector of Gaelic poetry, in order of time, was the celebrated James Macpherſon, whoſe tranſlations firſt attracted, in any eminent degree, the notice of the literary world to that ſpecies of compoſition.

Of the manner in which Mr Macpherſon was firſt induced to tranſlate fragments of ancient Gaelic poetry, and then to collect and publiſh the greater poems, of which ſo many editions have been ſince given to the world, the Committee has obtained an account * from the following gentlemen, well acquainted with the circumſtances, the authority of whoſe relation will readily be acknowledged by the public.

The Reverend Dr Blair,
† Dr Adam Ferguſon,
The Reverend Dr Carliſle, and
Mr Home, author of Douglas.

The

* See Appendix, No. 3.

† Dr Ferguſon's letter, beſides the account of Mr Macpherſon, contains the opinion which his own experience had led him to form on the buſineſs of the Committee.

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The laſt mentioned gentleman, naturally intereſted in whatever related to the poetry of the paſſions, happening to be at *Moffat*, a watering place in Dumfriesſhire, then of pretty general reſort, in the ſummer of 1759, met there with young Macpherſon, officiating as tutor to Mr Graham, younger of Balgowan (now Colonel Graham), whoſe father's family was then reſident at that place. Mr Home, in the courſe of inquiries at Mr Macpherſon about the manners and cuſtoms of the Highlands, was informed that one of their favourite amuſements was to liſten to the tales and compoſitions of their ancient bards, which were mentioned by Mr Macpherſon as containing much pathos and poetical imagery, and, at Mr Home's deſire, he tranſlated ſome fragments which his memory ſerved him to recollect. The beauty of thoſe fragments ſtruck Mr Home and his friends at Moffat to whom he communicated them, ſo forcibly, that they prevailed on Mr Macpherſon, who was rather averſe to the undertaking, to publiſh them in a ſmall volume at Edinburgh, of which they agreed to ſuperintend the publication, and to defray its expence. To this little volume Dr Blair wrote an introduction. Its publication attracted univerſal attention; and the literary circle at Edinburgh, of which the individuals, Mr D. Hume, Dr Robertſon, and others, have been ſince ſo well known to the world, agreed to induce its editor, by a ſubſcription, to perform a tour through the Highlands, for the purpoſe of collecting larger and more complete pieces of poetry which

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he informed them he knew to exiſt there, and of which ſome of the fragments already publiſhed were ſmall detached parts. He particularly mentioned a poem of an epic form, of conſiderable length, on the ſubject of the wars of the renowned Fion, or Fingal, (a name familiar to every ear in the remote parts of the Highlands), which he thought might be collected entire *. Under this patronage he performed his literary journey in 1760, tranſmitting from time to time to the ſubſcribers, and to others whoſe friendſhip was intereſted in his ſucceſs, accounts of his progreſs, and of the poems he had been able to collect. The diſtricts through which he travelled were chiefly the north-weſt parts of Inverneſsſhire, the Iſle of Sky, and ſome of the adjoining iſlands; places, from their remoteneſs and ſtate of manners at that period, moſt likely to afford, in a pure and genuine ſtate, the ancient traditionary tales and poems, of which the recital then formed, as the Committee has before ſtated, the favourite amuſement of the long and idle winter evenings of the Highlanders. On his return, he paſſed ſome time

* See the letters of Drs Blair, Fergufon and Carliſle, and of Mr Home, above referred to, App. No. 4; and alſo thoſe of Mr Macpherſon to Mr M'Laggan, in the Appendix, No. 10; in one of which, particular mention is made of his hopes of recovering an entire poem, of the epic kind, on the wars of *Fingal*; and alſo of another circumſtance, which has ſince been frequently matter of doubt and diſcuſſion, namely, his having procured *MSS.* in the courſe of his tour.

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time with his early acquaintance the Reverend Mr *Gallie*, then miſſionary at Badenoch, a gentleman extremely converſant with the Gaelic language; of whoſe aſſiſtance, together with that of Mr Macpherſon of Strathmaſhie, in Badenoch, ſince dead, he availed himſelf, in collating the different editions or copies of the poems he had collected, and in tranſlating difficult paſſages and obſolete words, which, from their ſuperior knowledge of the original language, they were well qualified to afford him *.

Of one of the gentlemen firſt named, Mr Gallie, miniſter of Kincardine in Roſsſhire, (who is unfortunately dead ſince the commencement of its inquiries), the Committee heard by accident. His modeſty, one of his many acknowledged merits, and very indifferent health, had kept him at home, in an

* When he undertook this journey, Mr Macpherſon ſeems to have been but an indifferent proficient in the Gaelic language, which, though one of his native tongues, (for Highlanders of any rank or education always ſpoke both it and the Engliſh), his ſtudies at the Univerſity, and reſidence in a family in which it was altogether unknown, had probably made him leſs perfect in than he might otherwiſe have been. A ludicrous inſtance of his inaccuracy in the Gaelic will be found, as related with great *naiveté*, in the declaration of Mr Ewan Macpherſon (Appendix, No. 6. p. 94.) Under the ſame No. of the Appendix the Committee ſubjoins the declaration of Malcolm Macpherſon, giving an account of the ſervices rendered by a brother of his, to his nameſake Mr James Macpherſon, when employed in collecting ancient MSS. in the Iſle of Sky, and particularly deſcribing a MS. book given to Mr Macpherſon at that period by his brother.

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an extremely remote part of the Highlands, and prevented his mixing with the literary circles in which any queſtion about the poems of Oſſian might have ariſen; but happening to be on a viſit to a friend in another part of Roſsſhire, a member of this Committee (Mr Charles M'Intoſh), who chanced alſo to be there, heard of his having been the intimate acquaintance of Mr Macpherſon, and of his having aſſiſted him in arranging his collection of Gaelic poetry, and requeſted him to write down what he recollected of thoſe circumſtances. This drew from him a letter, which, as it is not very long, and of conſiderable importance in this inquiry, the Committee inſerts in this place, together with a poſtſcript added to it by Mrs Gallie, which the Committee hopes that lady will forgive its alſo making public.

TO CHARLES MACINTOSH, ESQ. W. S. EDINBURGH.

DEAR SIR, *Kincardine, March 12th*, 1799.

I know you will not be diſpleaſed to hear that the cauſe of my long continued ſilence is ſo far removed that I am enabled to perform what I promiſed you. My eſteem for you prompts to it; yet I am more forcibly conſtrained by what I owe to a favourite truth, which I conſider as groſsly injured. What I told you at Newhall, I now authenticate, ſo far as my teſtimony can do it. Mr J. Macpherſon,

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pherſon, tranſlator of Oſſian's poems, was, for ſome years before he entered on that work, my intimate acquaintance and friend. When he returned from his tour through the Weſtern Highlands and Iſlands, he came to my houſe in Brae-Badenoch: I inquired the ſucceſs of his journey, and he produced ſeveral volumes, ſmall octavo, or rather large duodecimo, in the Gaelic language and characters, being the poems of Oſſian, and other ancient bards.

I remember perfectly, that many of thoſe volumes were, at the cloſe, ſaid to have been collected by Paul Macmhuirich Bard Clanraonuil, and about the beginning of the 14th century. Mr Macpherſon and I were of opinion, that though the bard collected them, yet that they muſt have been writ by an eccleſiaſtic, for the characters and ſpelling were moſt beautiful and correct. Every poem had its firſt letter of its firſt word moſt elegantly flouriſhed and gilded; ſome red, ſome yellow, ſome blue, and ſome green: the material writ on ſeemed to be a limber, yet coarſe and dark vellum: the volumes were bound in ſtrong parchment: Mr Macpherſon had them from Clanronald.

At that time I could read the Gaelic characters, though with difficulty, and did often amuſe myſelf with reading here and there in thoſe poems, while Mr Macpherſon was employed on his tranſlation. At times we differed as to the meaning of certain words in the original.

With much labour I have recovered ſome ſcattered parts of the tranſlation made at my fire-ſide, I ſhould

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ſhould rather ſay of the original tranſlated there, and I communicate to you a few ſtanzas, taken from the manuſcript.

'Bha fèr re fer, is cruaigh re cruaigh,
Sgiatha fuaimneach, daoine air lar,
Mur uird nan ceud air mac nan Eill,
Dh'eirigh agus theirin gach lann.
Ghluais Goll mar chrom oſaig on aird,
Gun ghlan e ſaoighin as
Bha Sauran mar chaoir faſàich thall,
Am fraoch fuaimar Gorm-mheall bras.
Ach cia mur chuiram ſios le fonn,
Bàs trom na n ſleagh bha ann?
Bu ſcrathoil ſtri bha ſan bhlàr,
Bu laſſach ard mo lann.
Bu ſcrathoil Oſgar mo mhac fein,
Thar càch bu treubhach maith!
Bha fòlas balbh am bhroilleach ſhuas,
Bhi ghruaigh mar chaoir † ſan chath.' *

* The literal tranſlation of the above paſſage is as follows:

Man was oppoſed to man, and ſteel to ſteel,
Shields ſounding, men falling;
Like hammers of hundreds on the ſon of the embers
Swords roſe and fell.
Gaul went on like a blaſt deſcending from the height,
As he deſtroyed heroes.
Sauran was like a flame of the deſert,
That conſumes the ſounding heath of Gormal.
But how ſhall I relate in ſong
The heavy death of ſpears that was there?
Terrible was the ſtrife of battle.
High flamed my ſword.

Terrible

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I have not Fingal by me, nor eaſy acceſs to it, therefore cannot ſay how theſe ſtanzas run in Engliſh; but they are ſent you as taken out of the manuſcript, by a friend who was at the time with Mr Macpherſon and me, a gentleman well known for an uncommon acquaintance with the Gaelic, and a happy facility in writing it in Roman characters. The word marked † was one of thoſe about which different opinions were held; but at laſt we agreed that it was properly ſpelled, and did expreſs the fire and rage in Oſcar's countenance, while his mind, ſedate and tranquil, regulated his heroiſm.

Whether Mr Macpherſon found the poem Fingal arranged as he gave it to the public, I cannot, at this diſtance of time, ſay. I well remember, that when I firſt read the tranſlation, I concluded that he did. Some ſtrokes of the ſublime and pathetic

Terrible was Oſcar my ſon,
Whoſe deeds of valour exceeded all.
Silent joy aroſe in my breaſt,
As his countenance glowed in the battle.

Man met with man, and ſteel with ſteel. Shields ſound, and warriors fall. As a hundred hammers on the red ſon of the furnace, ſo roſe, ſo rung their ſwords!

Gaul ruſhed on, like a whirlwind in Ardven. The deſtruction of heroes is on his ſword. Swaran was like the fire of the deſart, in the echoing heath of Gormal! How can I give to the ſong the death of many ſpears? My ſword roſe high, and flamed in the ſtrife of blood. Oſcar, terrible wert thou, my beſt, my greateſt ſon! I rejoiced in my ſecret ſoul, when his ſword flamed over the ſlain: *Macpherſ. Tranſ. Fing. B. 4. p. 291.*

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I felt for, becauſe the tranſlation, highly finiſhed as it is, did not them full juſtice, in my opinion. If there is any blame, perhaps the language into which he writ ſhould bear it.

I recollect (it was often matter of converſation), that by worm-eating, and other injuries of time, there were here and there whole words, yea lines, ſo obſcured, as not to be read; and I, to whom this was then better known than to any elſe, one excepted, gave great credit to Mr Macpherſon; concluding, that if he did not recover the very words and ideas of Oſſian, that the ſubſtitution did no diſcredit to that celebrated bard; and this, as I told you, I then conſidered as one of Mr Macpherſon's chief excellencies.

As I did, at the moſt early ſtage of the buſineſs, ſtand convinced that Fingal was no impoſition, you may gather from the above that I do ſo ſtill, notwithſtanding what Dr Johnſon, fortified by Dr M'Queen of Sky, has aſſerted. The latter appeared to me the moſt intemperate admirer of Oſſian I ever ſaw, and I both admired and envied what he collected of the works of that bard, and the accuracy and pathos with which he repeated them, though I am perſuaded, at that time of day, he did not ſee the original or tranſlation.

I was provoked, perhaps beyond meaſure, when I ſaw a friend, for whom I had a high eſteem, giving way ſo ſervilely to the prejudices of Dr Johnſon. I knew Dr M'Queen fond of literary fame, and conſidered by ſeveral as rather vain of how he ſtood

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ſtood in that line, and looked on him, in his commerce with Johnſon, as acted on by his leading paſſion; and, to acquire an *eclat*, otherwiſe inacceſſible, determined to make that great umpire his friend and panegyriſt, and dreading what muſt happen, did he oppoſe his, the Doctor's, favourite and leading prejudice. I admire the powers of his mind and pen, and look upon him as a great and good man; but who has diveſted himſelf of every weakneſs? To me he appears one of thoſe 'who cannot bear a rival near the throne.' This weakneſs, I believe, begot an inveterate, immoveable prejudice againſt Mr Macpherſon, and as Mr Macpherſon could not fall without making his country fall with him, the winning, venerable Oſſian, muſt be ſacrificed.

If, as is ſaid, Johnſon did not hear the return made to his queries by Dr M'Queen, and concluded it to be, not what in reality it was, but what he wiſhed, why did not Mr Boſwell, or ſome of the company preſent, remove the Doctor's miſtake? and if ſuch an attempt was not then ſeaſonable or expedient, why did not Mr Boſwell afterwards do juſtice to Dr M'Queen?

Having, within theſe few years, read Boſwell's Life of Johnſon, on cool reflection, I am made to think that Dr M'Queen made no reply to Dr Johnſon; or if he did, that it was ſo couched as to leave Johnſon in poſſeſſion of that prejudice he brought from home, and with which he was determined to return to it.

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Dr M'Queen will be forgiven by many for his caution, becauſe he ſaw ſo much of Johnſon, perhaps experienced, that he might dread contradiction or oppoſition from him would be as running the head into the lion's mouth. I think I can recollect, that gentlemen very high in the literary circle, and moſt intimate with Johnſon, often left the cauſe of truth and the field of conteſt to him, knowing the power and virulence of his ſarcaſms to be ſuch, as would irritate beyond meaſure, and which he ſeldom reſtrained when oppoſed.

Some years after the publication of Fingal, I happened to paſs ſeveral days with Mr M'Donald of Clanronald, in the houſe of Mr Butter of Pitlochry, who then reſided in the neighbourhood of Fort-William. Clanronald told me that Mr Macpherſon had the Gaelic manuſcripts from him, and that he did not know them to exiſt, till, to gratify Mr Macpherſon, a ſearch was made among his family papers. Clanronald added, that, ſince Mr Macpherſon's viſit, more volumes were recovered, and that he would ſend them to me, did he know by what channel. I heard nothing farther about them, nor indeed did I inquire.

Mr Macpherſon's tour through the Highlands and Iſlands was not ſo early as 1756. His firſt appearance to the public was by a poem called the Highlander, publiſhed in 1757, or the very beginning of the year following. In 1758 he entered on his tranſlation called Gaelic Fragments, and to this work he owed his being called to London, and to public

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public eſteem and attention. In 1760 or 1761 he made his Highland tour. It was in the former that I ſet up houſe and married, and it was to my houſe that Mr Macpherſon came, on his return to Badenoch. This, and ſome other circumſtances, being well remembered by Mrs Gallie, as it may ſerve your cauſe, ſhe propoſes to add a poſtſcript to this letter.

Dear Sir, what I now ſend you, as my health is far from being confirmed, is a great exertion. I hope you, and the moſt reſpectable Society of which you are a member, will make the proper allowances for the diſadvantages under which I write. If this effort merits your and their approbation, I ſhall be happy to be told ſo. Could I contribute to the ſucceſs of the Highland Society, but even in one line, I would be proud of it. Believe me to be, with great eſteem and regard, dear Sir, your moſt faithful humble ſervant,

ANDREW GALLIE.

Charles M'Intosh, Esq.
W. S. Edinburgh.

SIR,

I hope my intention in writing you will apologize for the freedom I uſe. Not any one thing is more in my remembrance, than ſeeing with Mr Macpherſon, when he returned from his tour, the Gaelic manuſcripts, as deſcribed by my huſband. I remember Mr Macpherſon moſt buſy at the tranſ-

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lation, and he and Mr Gallie differing as to the meaning of ſome Gaelic words, and that I was much delighted with the tranſlation, for I was not then well acquainted with the Gaelic. I have the honour to be, with eſteem, your moſt humble ſervant,

CHRISTIAN GALLIE.

C. M'Intosh, Esq.

After receipt of this firſt letter, the Committee ſent to Mr Gallie a copy of the circular queries above recited, p. 2, and added an inquiry who the friend was whom Mr Gallie had mentioned as having furniſhed the paſſage of Gaelic poetry mentioned in his letter, and as the *only other person* who knew as well as himſelf the ſtate of the poetry collected by Mr Macpherſon. To theſe inquiries Mr Gallie replied by the following letter. Mr Laing, we know, (for the circumſtance has been mentioned to him), will pardon the manner in which his name is mentioned; in which, though the zeal of the Highlander, and his prejudice againſt a ſuppoſed unfriendly diſtrict, is not extinguiſhed, it is tempered by that gentleneſs which the Committee underſtands to have been a principal feature in the good man's character.

SIR,

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SIR, *Kincardine, 4th March* 1801.

As I have not ſeen Mr Laing's hiſtory, I can form no opinion as to the arguments wherewith he has attempted to diſcredit Oſſian's poems: the attempt could not come more naturally than from Orcadians*. Perhaps the ſevere checks given by the ancient Caledonians to their predatory Scandinavian predeceſſors raiſed prejudices not yet extinct. I conceive how an author can write under the influence of prejudice, and not ſenſible of being acted upon by it.

I ſtand perſuaded, that Mr Laing's arguments cannot ſtagger my belief in the authenticity of Oſſian's poems. Before Mr Macpherſon could know his right hand from his left, I have heard fragments of them repeated, and many of thoſe fragments I recognized in Mr Macpherſon's tranſlation.

Fingal's ſtandard was my very early acquaintance: 'Togair Deo Grein e re Cramn, Brattach Fhinn 'ſbu mhor a meas.' The concluding conflict betwixt Fingal and the king of Lochlin engaged my young fancy ſo much, that the following ſtanza is ſtill remembered by me.

'Tilgidar dhubh 'n airm dhaithte,
Fiachadar ſpairn 'nda laoich.
Clachan agus talamh trom
Do ghluaiſd iad le bonn 'n cos.'

C 4 Verbatim

* Mr Laing is a native of Orkney.

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Verbatim in Engliſh.

Their burniſhed arms are laid aſide ;
The ſtrength of the heroes is tried ;
Stones and ſolid earth
Are overturned by their feet in the conteſt.

I know not if this makes any part of what Mr Macpherſon detailed of the exploits of Fingal ; my memory has failed me even in the very line in which it is moſt exerciſed. Had its decline kept off, I could give your honourable Society more ſpecimens, with which I had the honour of being early acquainted. Here I cannot get my memory refreſhed. The pride of anceſtry, the *fortia facta patrum*, are obſolete themes : the preſſure of the times, the change of ſyſtem, have brought forward other feelings and ſpeculations. Little elſe is left us of the ancient Caledonians than the refuſe of their remains: occupants hold their poſſeſſions, who are more able to advance the intereſt of landlords, and who are more attached to Plutus than to Mars, to Tellus than to the Muſes.

What Sir John Dalrymple predicted concerning the Highlanders, at the cloſe of the battle of Killicranky, ſeems to be coming forward with haſty ſtrides. Let Mr Laing read their character as drawn by that maſterly pen, and it will not ſeem to him incredible, that a former age ſhould, among the Caledonians, furniſh ſuch a hero as Fingal, or ſuch a bard as Oſſian.

I

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I remember, when I firſt read Fingal in Engliſh, I quarrelled a term in the war ſong, (proſnacha cath.) I heard it in early life repeated, and *ſnorting* ſteeds was the expreſſion, and, if I forget not, it ſo ſtood in the Gaelic manuſcript; and I did not then, neither do I now think it an improvement to have it tranſlated *generous* ſteeds.

I ſhall endeavour to recollect what I can of the war ſong, and to give it you; but I muſt obſerve, though I had my memory refreſhed by the manuſcript, as it is more than forty years back, that my edition of it cannot be conſidered as perfectly full and correct.

I muſt confeſs, that I heard in early life, among ſome of the moſt vulgar Senachies and ſingers, ſome parts of Oſſian's poems interlarded with what was marvellous in the extreme; and I have heard them repeated by others, then and afterwards, without that diſagreeable mixture.

The names of Oſſian, Fingal, Cumhal, Trenmor, their fathers and their heroes, are ſtill familiar, and held in the greateſt reſpect. Straths, [valleys] mountains, rocks and rivers, out of compliment to them, are named after them. We have a Strath-conan in this ſame county, and a high and craggy mountain in this ſame neighbourhood, perpetuates the fame of Fingal's favourite dog Bran.

Every great and ſtriking remain of antiquity, whoſe origin and uſe cannot be traced, is aſcribed to Fingal and his followers; ſuch as the roads in the glens of Lochaber, the circular buildings called Duns, and

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and the ſubterranean excavations, which are of the greateſt magnitude.

If the tender feelings, the chaſte and delicate ſentiments, the ſtriking appearances of the face and works of nature, under a vaſt variety of viciſſitudes, which abound in Oſſian, give offence, and create incredulity concerning him, one need not be at a loſs to make a large collection of ſuch from bards in our own days, whoſe geniuſes were not cultivated by education, and who were ſtrangers to the benefits of improved ſociety.

If I had not the benefit of education, were Oſſian and Virgil named, I would declare my belief in the one, and would be excuſed for being ſilent as to the other.

Had Mr Laing been born and bred in the Highlands ſixty years ago, I am perſuaded he would think and judge concerning Oſſian as I do, and would be moſt happy at having his early prepoſſeſſions immoveably eſtabliſhed, by ſeeing the manuſcripts to which I referred in my former correſpondence with the Highland Society.

It is partly owing to my infirm ſtate of health, that what I now give you, at the requeſt of the Society, communicated by Dr Kemp, was ſo long delayed. I uſe the freedom to write to him, and beg to be excuſed for uſing a borrowed hand.

Mr Macpherſon could not make his Highland tour earlier than the 60, for the reaſons formerly given.

The

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The queries ſent me may be elucidated in Badenoch and Lochaber. You may gather from what is above, that this corner can do little in that line.

When ſummer comes, if my health ſerves me, I ſhall make it my buſineſs to ſee certain old men, though at a conſiderable diſtance from here, who, I am told, do ſtill retain ſome of Oſſian's poems.

The gentleman to whom I referred in my former correſpondence, as a familiar acquaintance of Mr Macpherſon's and mine, and diſtinguiſhed for his acquaintance with the Gaelic language, is, alas! no more. His name was Lachlane Macpherſon of Strathmashy. He died in the 1767. I have the honour to be, with great reſpect, Sir, the Highland Society's, and your, moſt obedient humble ſervant,

ANDREW GALLIE.

In his private correſpondence with his friend the Reverend Dr Kemp, Mr Gallie ventured a conjecture with regard to the MSS. procured by Mr Macpherſon, which he had *ſeen in that gentleman's poſſeſſion*, though his modeſty had not allowed him to mention it in a correſpondence of ſo public a nature as that with the Committee. This conjecture is expreſſed in the following extract of a letter (the greateſt part of which is on private buſineſs) to Dr Kemp.

DEAR

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DEAR SIR, *Kincardine, 4th March* 1801.

I have, as far as my judgment and recollection ſerved me, made a communication to the Highland Society concerning *Oſſian's poems*. A certain conjecture of mine I venture to bring under your view and Mr Charles M'Intoſh's, to be diſpoſed of as your judgment will direct. I remember Mr Macpherſon reading the MSS. found in Clanronald's, execrating the bard who dictated to the amanuenſis, ſaying, 'D——n the ſcoundrel, it is he himſelf that now ſpeaks, and not Oſſian.' This took place in my houſe, in two or three inſtances: I thence conjecture that the MSS. were kept up, leſt they ſhould fall under the view of ſuch as would be more ready to publiſh their deformities than to point out their beauties.

It was, and I believe ſtill is well known, that the broken poems of Oſſian, handed down from one generation to another, got corrupted. In the ſtate of the Highlands, and its language, this evil, I apprehend, could not be avoided; and I think great credit is due, in ſuch a caſe, to him who reſtores a work of merit to its original purity.

Beſides the perſons already mentioned, the only other gentleman particularly acquainted with Mr Macpherſon's proceedings, in the courſe of his col-

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lecting and arranging the poems he afterwards publiſhed, of whom the Committee had an opportunity of inquiring, was Mr Alexander Morriſon, formerly captain in a provincial corps of loyaliſts in America, now reſiding at Greenock *. This gentleman's very advanced age may eaſily account for his forgetting minute circumſtances in matters of ſo old a date; but the ardour of his mind did not ſeem, in the communications which the Committee had with him on the ſubject, at all abated by his years; and there is a warm bluntneſs in the ſtyle of his declaration, tranſmitted to the Committee, in anſwer to their queries about his ſhare in Mr Macpherſon's labours, which the Committee thinks may juſtify their giving it entire in the Appendix, NO. 13.

On his arrival at Edinburgh, Mr Macpherſon communicated to his literary patrons the reſult of his expedition; and ſoon after he publiſhed one volume in 4to, containing FINGAL, an epic poem, in ſix books, and ſome other detached pieces of a ſimilar kind. Afterwards, in the year 1765, he publiſhed another epic poem, intitled TEMORA. Of one of the books (as he termed the diviſions) of this poem, he annexed the original Gaelic; of all the reſt he publiſhed only tranſlations; but he left at his death a ſum of money, 1000*l.*, for the purpoſe of defraying the expence of a publication of the originals of the

* Mr Morriſon died ſince this ſentence was written, February 1805, at the age of 84 or 85.

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the whole, with directions to his executors for carrying that purpose into effect.

Various delays, however, have taken place, in giving this publication to the world, arising chiefly [as appears from a short pamphlet written by Sir John Sinclair, one of a committee of gentlemen named for the purpose of superintending it, by the representative of Mr Macpherson's trustee] from indolence, or rather the indefion of the gentleman to whom its publication was, by the will of Mr Macpherson, entrusted. 'Mr Mackenzie, (says Sir John), was an excellent scholar, and a worthy man; but so scrupulously anxious to execute the trust reposed in him in such a manner as to do credit to so valuable a work, that he was led to put off, from time to time, determining on the plan to be adopted, respecting which various opinions were entertained.' In the mean time, however, he printed a specimen of the intended publication, being the beginning of the poem of *Carrickthura*, of which the original is given on the left hand page, a literal translation, by the learned and ingenious Mr R. M'Farlane, on the right, and at the bottom, the translation given by Mr Macpherson in his original publication. Of this specimen Mr Mackenzie did the Committee the favour to send it a copy, of which an accurate transcript is given in the Appendix, No. 12.

In Ireland, a collection of ancient poetry was published, some time after the appearance of Macpherson's

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pherſon's, by a very ingenious lady, *Miss Brooke*, who unfortunately, as it appears to the Committee, gave a tranſlation in *rhyme*, which, for the reaſon above ſtated, p. 20. ſeems to be attended with many diſadvantages, in rendering ancient poetry into Engliſh. She has, however, prefixed the originals in the character generally uſed, till of late, in writing Iriſh and Highland compoſitions, and has thus given to perſons accuſtomed to read that character, and converſant with the Iriſh language, an opportunity of comparing thoſe originals with her tranſlation, and alſo with poems under ſimilar titles, or on ſimilar ſubjects, collected in Scotland. Miſs Brooke's originals have ſeveral paſſages nearly coincident with thoſe in a collection made by *Mr Duncan Kennedy*, to be afterwards mentioned (now in the Society's poſſeſſion), but mixed with others, different both in ſubſtance and expreſſion. The coincidence may eaſily be accounted for, from the place where much of Kennedy's collection was made, namely, the weſtern coaſt of Scotland, adjoining to Ireland, and having much communication with that country. Ireland, as has already been obſerved, was, in ancient times, ſo much connected with the adjacent coaſt of Scotland, that they might almoſt be conſidered as one country, having a community of manners and of language, as well as the cloſeſt political connexion. At a ſubſequent period, the ſituation of the two countries became conſiderably different. After the deſtruction of *Icolmkill*, Ireland ſheltered and preſerved that learning which Scotland in a great meaſure loſt;

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and thence in Ireland are to be found numerous hiſtorical documents and records, which the antiquarian looks for in vain among any archives or collections of antiquities in Scotland. It is obſervable, however, that moſt of the copies of the ancient *Fingalian* poems, brought from Ireland, are either wholly, or at leaſt contain paſſages, evidently corrupted, and of a more modern ſtile of compoſition, than poems under ſimilar titles collected in the Highlands of Scotland. Even thoſe publiſhed by *Miss Brooke*, though of very great merit on the whole, bear ſtrong marks of this departure from the ancient ſimplicity which marks the collection made by *Dr Smith*, or even moſt of that made by *Kennedy*. * One very conſpicuous feature of difference is the magical machinery of ſome of the Iriſh poems, a very beautiful ſpecimen of which is given by Miſs Brooke, in the poem of the *Chace*, traſlated by her. This licence of poetical fiction is evidently a change, but not an improvement, on the ſimple narrative, embelliſhed

* In Miſs Brooke's *Manos*, which in many reſpects is the ſame with a copy of that poem in the poſſeſſion of this ſociety, mention is made, in a paſſage evidently interpolated, of 'the Moorish king,' which Miſs Brooke confeſſes is a ſtrange paſſage which ſhe is unable to account for. And in the poem of *Moire borb.* as given by her, which bears a cloſe affinity to the Borbar and Fainaſollis † of *Macpherſon*, there is a paſſage ſignifying that the foreign hero rode over the ſea on a magical horſe. (*Miss Brooke*, p. 128.)

† Fing. B. 3. p. 275-277.

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embellished only by poetical imagery, and a reference to the belief of the employment and intervention of departed spirits, (the natural creed of the earlier periods of society), which the purer specimens of the Fingalian poetry above alluded to exhibit.

Miss Brooke candidly says, that most of the poems she has published are 'of a later date than that in which Ossian flourished, and are supposed to be compositions of the 8th, 9th, and 10th centuries;' but she pleads, very justly, for their favourable reception, in consideration of the numberless beauties which they contain. Whoever has looked with attention on the history of nations, or the progress of civil society, will easily conceive how the superior cultivation of Ireland in literature, civil polity, and a religious establishment, might naturally tend to produce such a change and corruption in the ancient traditionary poems, as they seem to have experienced in that country.

About the year 1780, Mr John Clark, land-surveyor in Badenoch, published translations of ancient Gaelic poetry, containing, among other pieces, an entire poem, intituled *Morduth*, which, though not one of those published or taken notice of by Macpherson, possesses a great deal of merit. This poem, as published by Clark, contains *three* divisions, or, as they are termed, *books*. It has very lately been given in a verse translation, in a volume of poems published by the ingenious *Mrs Grant* of

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Laggan, who never ſaw any more than *two* books of it; but ſhe ſays, in a letter to the Chairman of this Committee, that ſhe has no doubt the third, as given by Clark, is genuine, not only from her knowledge of that gentleman's character, but from the circumſtance of his father and grandfather being great Gaelic ſcholars and collectors, who moſt probably had an opportunity of obtaining ſuch poems which were not within her reach.

Among the collectors of ancient Gaelic poetry may be mentioned Mr *Hill*, an ingenious Engliſh gentleman, who, in an extenſive tour through the Highlands, in the ſummer of the year 1780, made anxious inquiries after the poetry of Oſſian, and procured, chiefly from one *M'Nab*, a blackſmith at Dalmaly in Argyllſhire, copies of ſeveral ancient poems, not of the higheſt value, and more corrupted than copies of the ſame poems in the poſſeſſion of this Society *. Among theſe are '*Oſſian agus an Clerich*,' '*Oſſian*

* Beſides this corruption of the original text, the tranſlation obtained by Mr Hill is frequently very incorrect and erroneous. It may be amuſing, and not without its uſe, to quote ſome inſtances of thoſe miſtakes, where Mr Hill has innocently built hypotheſes on the blunders of his tranſlator. This may be a warning to others of equal ingenuity, and perhaps equal impartiality with Mr Hill, but with knowledge as circumſcribed, and information as defective as his, who venture, a little raſhly, not only to form their own opinion, but to prompt and to guide the opinion of the public.

Thus,

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'Offian and the Clerk,' ſometimes called 'the Battle of Fingal and Manus;' '*Mar mharbh Diarmad*

* Thus, in p. 13. l. 47. of *Ossian agus an Clerich*,

'Mi fein, agus m'athair, is Goll,
Triur bo mho glonn ſan fhein,'

is rendered in the tranſlation given by Mr Hill,

'Myſelf, my father and Gaul, were thoſe
Who had moſt children amongſt our heroes;'

inſtead of the true meaning,

'Myſelf, my father and Gaul, were the three
Of greateſt proweſs among the heroes.'

And again, p. 22. ſecond ſtanza of *Urnigh Ossian*, 'Oithein nan Glonn' is tranſlated 'O! Offian of many children,' inſtead of 'O! Offian of the deeds of proweſs.' From which paſſages Mr Hill is led to remark, 'that being the father of many children is ever accounted a great honour among barbarians.'

At page 24, ſtanza 18,

'Sgan a chreideas me do ſgeul
A cleirich led leabhar ban
Gum bithidh Fionn na chomh fhial,
Aig duine no aig Dia an laimh.'

Thus Engliſhed in the tranſlation of Mr Hill:

'I can hardly believe thy tale, thou light-haired and unworthy clerk! that the heroes of our race ſhould be in captivity either to the devil or to God.'

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mad an Torc nimhe,' the Death of Dermid; '*Mar Mharbhadh Bran*,' the Death of Bran; and '*Urnigh Ossian*,' Offian's Prayer; of which, having procured tranſlations from a gentleman in the neighbourhood, Mr Hill publiſhed theſe tranſlations, with the original

Inſtead of

'I can hardly believe thy tale, thou clerk *with thy white book*, that Fingal, or any ſo generous as he, ſhould be in captivity either to God or man.' On which Mr Hill inquires, in a note, 'Why was light hair eſteemed an opprobrium? the Erſe themſelves are a red-haired race.'

In page 25. ſtanza 16,

'Nois tha deireadh air tois
Scuir do d' chaois aſhean fhirle,'

is rendered in Mr Hill's pamphlet,

'Now the laſt things are become firſt; change thou therefore thy ways, old man with the grey locks.' Now there is no ſuch word in the Gaelic as chaois; the couplet ſhould be written thus, as in other copies of the poem:

'Nois tha deire ar taois
Scuir dod bhaois a ſhean fhir leith.'

'Now that thy age is at a cloſe, ceaſe from thy vanity, grey old man.' But upon the foregoing miſtake of the tranſcriber, and want of knowledge in the tranſlator, Mr Hill founds a charge of plagiariſm from the ſcriptural paſſage in St Matthew, chap. 20. verſe 16. 'So the laſt ſhall be firſt, and the firſt laſt; for many are called, but few choſen.'

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original Gaelic prefixed, firſt in the Gentleman's Magazine, and afterwards in a ſmall pamphlet. He ſubjoined remarks of his own upon the queſtion, much agitated at the time, of the genuineneſs of Macpherſon's Fingal, and on the general nature of Gaelic poetry. Theſe remarks are written in general with candour and impartiality, and with conſiderable acuteneſs, as far as the author's limited information enabled him to judge of the ſubject: but it were unreaſonable to expect, from the imperfect materials furniſhed by a deſultory tour in the Highlands, made by a perſon ignorant of the language, as well as of the manners of the country, a very ſatisfactory diſcuſſion of queſtions, on which a well informed judgment can only be the reſult of laborious inquiry, and the examination of many documents, not more difficult to procure, than to read or underſtand when procured. This remark might perhaps be applied, in a more or leſs conſiderable degree, to moſt of the writers on the ſubject, and to none more juſtly than to the moſt celebrated of the number, *Dr Samuel Johnſon* *.—But the Committee, as it ſet out with

* Dr Johnſon's powers have been variouſly rated, and ſeldom perhaps with impartiality on either ſide. Men, like children, may be ſpoiled by the partiality and indulgence of their families and friends. The literary ſociety of London was, in ſome ſort, the family of Johnſon, who poſſeſſed a mind and diſpoſitions which did not require adulation to call forth his powers, or to confirm his ſelf-confidence. Foreigners judged of him more impartially; except when, from an oppoſition which men are apt to indulge to extravagant panegyric, they undervalued what his

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with declaring, is ſtudious to avoid any approach to wards controverſy, ſatisfied with producing authorities, rather than ambitious of deducing arguments from them.

As the pamphlet of Mr Hill is not in general circulation, a ſpecimen of the poetry which he collected, and of the remarks which it ſuggeſted to him, are inſerted in the Appendix, NO. VIII. To theſe are ſubjoined ſome remarks on Mr Hill's publication,

countrymen eſtimated ſo highly. Scotland was, in ſome degree, a foreign country to Johnſon. His peculiar talent might perhaps be ſaid to conſiſt in clothing ordinary ſentiments in imperial language; but he had the ſkill to make the garment fit ſo well, that, like handicrafts dreſſed for a pageant, the proper rank and value of the ſentiments were frequently forgotten in the gorgeouſneſs of their robes. Were the character of Johnſon and of his writings to be drawn with that ſeverity which he ſometimes indulged in his account of others, conſiderable deduction would be made from the merits of both; yet, with all the abatements which ſuch ſeverity might ſtate, it would ſtill leave behind a character of extraordinary powers and uncommon endowments, of wiſdom, diſcernment, imagination, learning, piety, benevolence, which their attendant weakneſſes (weakneſſes greatly owing to an originally morbid conſtitution), dogmatiſm, prejudice, ſuperſtition, and partiality, though they might ſometimes obſcure or miſlead, could never extinguiſh or altogether overcome. The Society will pardon its Committee for this note, which it hopes will not be thought impertinent in mentioning a man to whom national prejudice on either ſide of the Tweed has often been partial or unjuſt, and whoſe deciſion on the ſubject of the Committee's inquiries has been adopted on one ſide, or cenſured on the other, with deference or contempt alike unwarrantable and unfounded.

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tion, by Dr Donald Smith, which, though of ſome length, and bearing more the air of diſcuſſion than the Committee in general allows itſelf to aſſume, are too valuable to the antiquary and the Celtic ſcholar to be omitted.

If the authority of travellers into thoſe parts of the country where the ancient poetry is moſt generally found, is to be reſorted to, the Committee may quote the opinion of two of the lateſt and beſt informed who have viſited the weſtern Highlands and Iſlands; whoſe teſtimony muſt have the greater weight, from their being eminent in ſciences which require peculiar accuracy in their deductions, and call for demonſtration in their proofs: *Lord Webb Seymour*, and *Mr Profeſſor Playfair*. The former was ſo obliging as to communicate to the Chairman of the Committee an extract from his *note-book*, kept during a tour through the Hebrides, which is here ſubjoined in the ſhort and haſty form as taken down by his Lordſhip at the time; a form which adds to its genuineneſs, though it may injure its ſtyle. Mr Playfair deſired to ſignify to the Committee the perfect coincidence of his opinion with that of his Noble friend and fellow-traveller.

'*Iſle of Sky.*——OSSIAN.'

'Heard Mr Nicholſon repeat a poem, or part of a poem, which was tranſlated to us by Mr M'Donald of *Scalpa*, in a ſlight outline of the ſtory. It re-

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preſented Fingal and his heroes encamped on the ſhore, when they deſcried a ſail at a diſtance, and ſoon after another in purſuit of it. As the firſt approached, a lady was diſcovered in it, apparently in great diſtreſs; who immediately, on her landing, implores ſuccour from them, againſt a prince who was purſuing her in the other veſſel, and receives aſſurance of his aſſiſtance. The prince ſoon after lands; his ſtature, armour, and heroic appearance, are magnificently deſcribed. Oſcar and Gaul are ſent to meet the foe. They are defeated. A few unconnected lines were all that he knew further of the poem; from which, however, it might be collected, that the hero and his followers were ſlain by the reſt of Fingal's heroes.—Mr Evan Macpherſon—Malcolm Macpherſon—The poem he repeated was the deſcription of a battle.—Mr Evan Macpherſon accompanied Mr James Macpherſon through Sky, and a part of Uiſt, when he was engaged in collecting the poems, and was employed by him to write out the Gaelic from the oral delivery. He ſaid that he had written out many for him, but unfortunately could not remember which. This, he ſaid, was in the year 1759 or 60. Mr Campbell, brother to Captain Campbell of Dunſtaffnage, told that he had often compared ſeveral of the poems tranſlated by Macpherſon, with the original, as orally delivered to him, and that he had found them to vary but little, except in the ſuperior expreſſiveneſs of the Gaelic language; a circumſtance in which all agreed, with whom we diſcourſed on the ſubject; and

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and which, from the known ſuperiority of all poems in their native language, may be fairly allowed, without imputing the aſſertion to the patriotic prejudices of the Highlanders. On aſking him for the particular poems he had thus compared, he named Oſcar and Malvina. Mr Donald M'Queen was known to believe perfectly in the poems, (from Mr M'Leod of Taliſker.) Mr Auguſtine M'Donald, a Catholic prieſt in Moydart, knows at preſent the whole of a poem which he learnt when a boy, and which has not been given in Macpherſon's tranſlation. Beſides theſe poems, there are a number of tales current among the people, attributing to the Fingalian heroes the power of giants, full of miraculous events and moſt romantic ſuperſtition. The people cautioned us to diſtinguiſh betwixt them. Scalpa told us of a dialogue in verſe, betwixt Oſſian and Peter of the Pſalms (ſuppoſed to be one of the firſt Chriſtian miſſionaries), who had married Oſſian's daughter. Peter is endeavouring to convert Oſſian (who is repreſented as extremely old), by ſetting forth the advantages of the Chriſtian religion. Oſſian replies, that himſelf can inform him of ſomething far more intereſting, and enters into an account of the exploits of Fingal and his heroes. Peter, incenſed by this contempt, begins to threaten him, by pointing out the torments he would ſuffer in the other world, as a puniſhment for his incredulity. Oſſian anſwers, "Give to Oſſian but Oſcar and Gaul, God could not erect a houſe that could confine Oſſian." This dialogue, we were told, bore great marks of anti-

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quity; but they did not ſeem very decided whether to aſſign it a place among the poems or the tales. Mrs Nicholſon of Scorrybreck repeated to us a ſhort poem, entitled 'Dearg Mac Deirg:' its ſtyle was heroic; but ſome paſſages, Mr Donald Martin told us, led him to ſuſpect its antiquity. This poem, however, Mrs N. ſaid ſhe had repeated to Macpherſon, who had it written down by a gentleman preſent, though it has not appeared in his tranſlation: probably the ſuſpected paſſages led him to reject it. How Johnſon could leave Sky, without having got rid of his prejudices againſt Oſſian, is indeed aſtoniſhing. Inquiries he certainly made, but in ſuch a manner, that Mr Macpherſon of Slate told us they hardly knew what they pointed at, or how to anſwer them. Every body in Sky laments that Mr Donald M. did not give a poſitive anſwer to the queſtion, whether he believed in them himſelf? But it was not every one who had the good fortune to have ſo ſimple and direct a queſtion.'

About the year 1786, *Mr John Gillies* bookſeller in Perth publiſhed a pretty large collection of Gaelic poetry, ancient and modern. Mr Gillies, though an entire ſtranger to the Gaelic tongue, was very zealous in the preſervation of its monuments, and his collection has conſiderable merit. But it is evident, from the manner in which it is printed and arranged, that it was not prepared for the preſs with ſufficient accuracy or attention. Hence many words, and even ſome lines, are altogether unintelligible.

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The firſt line, for example, of Oſſian's expedition to the Lake of Lego, in ſuit of Evirallin (p. 11.), 'Is cuth duine far nach Fionduin,' is quite inexplicable, the word Fionduin being unknown in the Gaelic language, and the word *cuth* an obſolete expreſſion for head, admitting in this ſituation of no meaning. So is likewiſe 'Saoith Locha Leige' (ſtanza 3.), 'Do chloth dhuinn' (ſtanza 8.), and 'Seachd catha d'an dea mhalaidh' (ſtanza 10.)

Stanza 17. 'Bu Chomhrag' &c. has no meaning as a whole, though each line, taken ſeparately, is ſignificant. The reſt of the more ancient poems are alſo more or leſs corrupted, except Fingal's advice to Oſcar (p. 84.), which is perfectly correct, and the ſame as it appears in the copy furniſhed the Society by Mr Macdonald of Staffa, which is given in a compariſon of Mr Macpherſon's tranſlations with parallel paſſages, in the poems collected by the Committee, Appendix, No. 15.

Of thoſe who, ſince the time of Macpherſon, have collected or publiſhed Gaelic poetry, the moſt intelligent and ſucceſsful is the Reverend Dr Smith, miniſter of Campbelton in Argyleſhire, who publiſhed, in the year 1780, Diſſertations on Gaelic Antiquities, to which were ſubjoined, a Collection of Ancient Poems, tranſlated from the Gaelic of Oſſian, Ullin, Orran, and others; and the Doctor afterwards, in 1787, publiſhed the originals of the poems he had ſo tranſlated. Some account of the manner in which he procured theſe originals, himſelf,

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ſelf, has annexed to his publication. (*Vide* Dr Smith's Diſſertation, p. 128.) A more particular one the Committee wiſhed to receive from himſelf; but he frankly told its Chairman, that he had been ſo much diſguſted with the reception of his book, as to have long baniſhed the remembrance from his mind; and that he had not even kept a copy for his own uſe, to which he might refer for an anſwer to his queries. Dr Smith's letters to Mr Mackenzie, however, contain ſo much good ſenſe, and ſo much rational remark on the ſubject of the Committee's inquiries, that it is tempted to annex them entire to this Report, (Appendix, NO. 5.) One paſſage the Committee will quote here, as affording a ſtrong proof of the Doctor's fairneſs and candour. He ſays, 'that on his obſerving in one of the poems one or two paſſages which he thought of uncommon beauty, the perſon who gave it as ancient ſaid *he had compoſed thoſe paſſages himſelf;* that he, Dr Smith, imputed this at the time to the man's vanity; but that he thought it right to ſtate it to the Committee.' Whether ſuch perſon might compoſe one or two paſſages in thoſe poems, the Committee will not pretend to decide; but when one looks over the liſt of thoſe from whom the Doctor collected his originals, and conſiders their rank and ſituation in life, their education and opportunities of improvement, to believe that they could compoſe ſuch poems would be a degree of credulity much greater than is neceſſary to believe in the authenticity of Oſſian.

This

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This publication by Dr Smith, if not impeached in its authenticity, your Committee cannot but regard as very ſtrong evidence in the queſtion ſubmitted to its conſideration and inquiry; ſince, in the poems publiſhed by him, are to be found not only the ſame ſtrain of high and impaſſioned poetry, but alſo the ſame delicacy and refinement of ſentiment and feeling, which form ſo extraordinary a feature in the poems tranſlated by Mr Macpherſon. Of ſome paſſages of one of thoſe poems, 'the Death of Gaul,' the Committee will give a literal tranſlation, which they think inferior to none of thoſe given by Macpherſon, either in ſublimity or tenderneſs. The tranſlation is given line for line of the original, which, to enable the Gaelic reader to judge of the fidelity with which it is rendered, is inſerted in the Appendix, NO. 14. The argument of the poem is ſhortly this: Fingal ſummoned his heroes for an expedition to the Iſle of *Iſrona*. A flood in the river *Strumon* prevented Gaul from joining them in time; but he embarked in his ſhip alone on the ſucceeding day. On his voyage, however, he paſſed his friends, who were returning with victory, unperceived, and landed ſingly on the hoſtile ſhore. According to the chivalrous idea of thoſe times, he would not fly, but ſtruck his ſhield as a token of defiance to the iſlanders, againſt whom he ſingly maintained a deſperate conflict, till, fearful of a near approach, they rolled a ſtone from above, which ſtriking his thigh, diſabled him from moving, and there he was left by his enemies, daſtardly alike and cruel, to pine and die.

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die. His wife *Evirchoma*, anxious for his fate, embarked in a ſkiff, with her infant ſon *Ogall* at her breaſt, in queſt of her lord, whom ſhe found in the pitiable ſituation we have deſcribed, and was able to carry to her boat, where they were diſcovered next morning by Oſſian, who had failed in queſt of them, ſpeechleſs and dying. He was only able to ſave the child.

The opening of the poem is in that ſpirit of melancholy which Oſſian indulges, when he recals the deeds of the heroes of his race.

Is not this ſilence of night mournful,
While ſhe ſpreads her dark clouds over the vales?
Sleep has deſcended on the youth of the chace
Upon the heath, his dog reſting againſt his knee.
The children of the mountains he purſues
In his dream, while his ſleep is forſaking him.—
Sleep, ye children of fatigue,
While each ſtar but aſcends the height.
Sleep, ſwift dog of the courſe,
Oſſian will not interrupt your ſlumbers.
I am watching alone:
Soothing to me is the gloom of night,
While I travel from dell to dell,
Without hope of morning or dawn.—
Spare thy light, O ſun!
And do not conſume ſo faſt thy torches:
Like the king of the Fingalians, generous is thy ſoul,
But thy liberality will hereafter fail.
Spare the torches of thouſand flames
In thy blue hall, when thou goeſt
Under the duſky gates to ſleep,
Beneath the darken'd ſkirt of the weſtern ſky.
Spare them, before they leave thee alone,

As

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As I am, without a perſon to ſhare my fondneſs.
Spare them, ſince there is not a hero to view
The blue flame of the beautiful torches.
Caothan of the joyful lights,
Thy torches are now darkened;
Like an oak which has quickly faded,
Thy dwellings and their people have failed.
Eaſt or weſt, on the face of thy mountain,
There is not found of one of them but the ruin.
In *Scallama* *, in *Taura*, or *Tigh-mor-ri* *,
There is no ſhell, nor ſong, nor harp;
They are all become green mounds,
And their ſtones in their own meadows.
The ſtranger will not perceive from the defart
Any one of them ſhewing its head through the cloud.
And thou Scallama, houſe of my delight!
Is this heap thine old ruin?
Where now grows the thiſtle, the heath, and the rank graſs,
Mourning under the drop of night.—
Around my grey locks
The ſolitary owl flutters,
And the roe ſtarts from her bed,
Without fearing the mournful Oſſian.
Roe of the hollow *Cairns* †,
Where dwelt Oſcar and Fion ‡,
I will not do thee any hurt;
Never ſhalt thou be wounded by my dart.—
To the top of Scallama I ſtretch my hand;
The dwelling has no cover but ſky.
I ſearch for the broad ſhield below;
The top of my ſpear has ſtruck its boſs.—

Sounding

* The Selma and Temora of Macpherſon.
† Heaps of ſtones. ‡ Fingal.

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Sounding boſs of battles!
Gladdening to me is thy ſound;
It awakes the days that have paſſed,
And in ſpite of age my ſoul bounds.
or,
As the wind awakes the flaming heath of the mountains,
or,
Like the ſtream of the mountains my ſoul bounds *.
But far from me be the thoughts of war;
My ſpear is become a ſupporting ſtaff;
My boſſy ſhield no more ſhall it ſtrike.—
But what ſound is this that has awakened it?
A piece of a ſhield worn with age,
Like the waning [black-edged] moon its form.
The ſhield of *Gaul* it is,
The ſhield of the companion of my excellent *Oſcar*.—
But what is this that has ſaddened my ſoul?
Often, Oſcar, haſt thou received thy fame;
The partner of thy love ſhall now be the ſubject of ſong;
Oh, *Malvina*, with thy harp be near!'

The deſcription of *Evirchoma* witneſſing the departure of her huſband, is equally pictureſque and natural.

'In the light ſhip of rough waves
The hero followed us on the ſecond morning.—
But who is ſhe on the rock, like miſt,
Looking through tears on Gaul?
Her dark hair wanders on the wind,
And her ſoft hand, white as foam, ſurrounds her forelock.

Young

* Various readings in other editions.

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Young is the man-child on her boſom;
Sweet is her hum in his ear;
But a ſigh has wafted away the ſong.
On Gaul thy thoughts are fixed, Evirchoma!'

The break of tenderneſs in Gaul's recollection of his wife and child, which croſſes for a moment the ſtern unyielding reſolution not to turn his back on his foes, which, with the ſuperſtition of thoſe heroic times, he ſuppoſes would give anguiſh and ſhame to his brave father's ſpirit, is one of thoſe happy ſtrokes which mark the true feeling and ſpirit of a poet.

'*Morni!* behold me from the mountain.
Thy own ſoul was as an impetuous current
Foaming white within a rocky ſtrait:
Such is the ſoul of thy ſon.—
Evirchoma! Ogall!—
But mild beams belong not to the ſtorm;
The ſoul of Gaul is in the roar of battle.'

The anxiety of the wife and mother is not leſs naturally expreſſed in the following lines uttered by Evirchoma.

'What has detained thee, my love!
Behind the reſt in the Iſle of Freona,
While I bewail on the ſhelving rocks,
And echo anſwers to my ſpeech?
Might'ſt thou not have returned by this time,
Though miſchance by ſea had befallen thee,
Thy expectation being towards the child of thy love,
Who pours with me the earneſt ſigh?
Woeful, that thou canſt not hear, my love!

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The broken ſound of thy name
From the mouth of Ogall, to ſpeed thee!—
But I fear thou wilt not return.'

Her perplexity between her deſire to go to the aſſiſtance of her huſband, and her fear of leaving her infant behind her in the boat, is deſcribed with infinite tenderneſs, and concludes with a ſimile as appropriate as it is beautiful.

'She glanced by the ſcanty beam
On the beautiful face of her ſon,
When about to leave him in her narrow ſkiff.—
"Babe of my love! be here unobſerved!"—
As a dove on the rock of *Ulacha*,
When gathering berries for her tender brood,
Returns often without taſting them,
While the hawk riſes in her thoughts;
So returned three times *Evircboma*,
Her ſoul as a wave that is toſſed
From breaker to breaker, when the tempeſt blows,
Till ſhe heard a mournful voice from the tree of the ſhore.'

The dying action of Evirchoma is a ſtroke of maternal tenderneſs not leſs expreſſive. nor leſs touching, for the ſimplicity with which it is deſcribed.

'I lifted his helmet; I ſaw his locks
Diſorder'd, uneven in ſweat.
My cry aroſe,
And he raiſed with difficulty his eye.
Death came, like a cloud on the ſun;—
No more ſhalt thou ſee thy Oſcar.
The beauty of Evirchoma is darken'd.
Her ſon, unconcern'd, holds the end of a ſpear.

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Feeble was her voice, and few her words;
I raiſed her up with my hand,
But ſhe laid my palm on the head of her ſon,
While her ſigh roſe frequent.—
Dear child, vain is thy fondling,
Thy mother no more ſhall ariſe.
I ſhall myſelf be a father to thee,
But *Evirallin* * is no more!'

The concluſion of the poem is in that dignified ſtile of ſorrow and of praiſe, which Fingal, whoſe lamentation over Gaul it contains, is always repreſented, in the ancient poems, as uttering on the loſs of his friends.

'What is the ſtrength of the warrior,
Though he ſcatter, as wither'd leaves, the battle?
To-day though he be valiant in the field,
To-morrow the beetle will prevail over him!'

* * * *

'Prepare, ye children of muſical ſtrings,
The bed of *Gaul*, and his ſun-beam † by him,
Where may be ſeen his reſting-place from afar,
Which branches high overſhadow,
Under the wing of the oak of greeneſt flouriſh,
Of quickeſt growth, and moſt durable form,
Which will ſhoot forth its leaves to the breeze of the ſhower,
While the heath around is ſtill wither'd.
Its leaves, from the extremity of the land,
Shall be ſeen by the birds of ſummer,

* The wife of Oſſian.
† The common term for a ſtandard.

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And each bird ſhall perch, as it arrives,
On a ſprig of its verdant branch.
Gaul in his miſt ſhall hear their chearful note,
While virgins are ſinging of *Evirchoma*.
Until all of theſe ſhall periſh,
Your memory ſhall not be diſunited:
Until the ſtone crumble into duſt,
And this tree decay with age;
Until ſtreams ceaſe to run,
And the ſource of the mountain waters be dried up;
Until theſe be loſt, in the flood of age,
Each bard, and ſong, and ſubject of ſtory,
The ſtranger ſhall not aſk, 'Who was *Morni's* ſon?
Or where was the dwelling of the king of Strumon?'

Of this latter part of the poem, called, from the principal figure in it, '*Leaba Ghuill*,' the *Bed of Gaul*, the Committee received another copy, differing very little from the above, from a moſt reſpectable correſpondent, the Reverend *Mr M'Diarmid*, miniſter of *Weem* in Perthſhire, which he procured in a channel altogether different from that of Dr Smith, and tranſmitted to the Committee, before he knew that it had been previouſly publiſhed. That the Society may have an opportunity of comparing the original with Dr Smith's copy, it is ſubjoined, immediately after that copy, in the Appendix, p. 184. The literal tranſlation, as given by Mr MacDiarmid, is as follows:

THE

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THE BED OF GAUL.

'O ſpread the bed of Gaul, ye ſons of the ſtrings, and his ſun-beam cloſe by him, where his bed may be marked from afar, though overſhadowed with lofty boughs; under the oak of the greeneſt blow, that quickeſt grows, and of the moſt laſting hue, that pours out her leaves on the breath of the ſhower, though the field all around be withered. Her leaves, from the utmoſt bounds, ſhall be ſeen by the birds of ſummer, and every bird, as he comes, alights on the top of the bough of *Strumon*. *Gaul* ſhall hear their chaunting in his miſt, and virgins ſinging of *Evirchoma*. Till the ſucceeding changes take place, the memory of you ſhall not be torn aſunder. Till the ſtone moulder into duſt,—till with age this branch ſhall wither,—till the brooks ceaſe to run,—till the ſource of the mountain ſtream run dry,—till in the flood of time be loſt the age of every bard, ſong, and ſubject of every tale;—the ſtranger ſhall not aſk, 'Who is the ſon of *Morni?*' or, 'Where dwells the king of *Strumon?*'

Mr M'Diarmid's ſon, through whoſe channel the Committee procured this poem, ſome time after it was tranſmitted, wrote the following letter to Mr

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Mackenzie, which, in juſtice to Mr M'Diarmid, as well as to Dr Smith, the Committee thinks it proper to lay before the Society.

'SIR,

'On the other page my father has ſent a copy of Oſſian's Addreſſes to the Sun. The Bed of Gaul, Mr M'Farlane, from whom my father had it, got from a perſon in Argyleſhire, who had heard it in his youth. Neither Mr M'Farlane nor my father ſuſpected its being already in print; but, a few days ago, on looking over the poems publiſhed by Dr Smith of Campbeltown, my father obſerved it at the concluſion of the poem intitled '*Tiomnah Ghuil.*' This miſtake I hope you will have the goodneſs to excuſe, as it aroſe merely from ignorance of what Dr Smith had done. Mr M'Farlane's finding it by a different channel from Dr Smith, you will no doubt look upon as a proof of its authenticity.'

From the ſame gentleman, the Reverend Mr M'Diarmid, the Committee received two celebrated paſſages of poems publiſhed by Mr Macpherſon: Oſſian's Addreſs to the Sun in *Carthon*, and a ſimilar Addreſs in *Carrickthura*. The originals of thoſe two poems will alſo be found in the Appendix, pages 185, & 187. The letter from Mr M'Diarmid to

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to his ſon, accompanying them, and the tranſlations by Mr M'Diarmid, the Committee ſubjoins here, with Macpherſon's tranſlation of the ſame paſſages at the bottom of the page.

'*Weem, April 9th*, 1801.

'Incloſed you have a tranſlation of the Gaelic pieces which I ſent you laſt week. It is as literal as poſſible. I made it ſo on purpoſe, without any regard to the Engliſh idiom, that you might underſtand the original the better. Every one knows at what diſadvantage a tranſlation of this kind muſt appear, from one language into another, but more eſpecially when the idioms and genius of the two languages differ ſo widely as thoſe of the Gaelic and Engliſh. As I have not a copy of Mr Macpherſon's tranſlation by me, I could not compare it with the original, nor point out wherein he has departed from it; Mr Mackenzie will eaſily ſee that, by comparing his tranſlation with mine. *I got the copy of these poems, about thirty years ago, from an old man in Glenlyon.* I took it, and ſeveral other fragments, now I fear irrecoverably loſt, from the man's mouth. *He had learnt them in his youth*, from people in the ſame glen, which muſt have been long before Macpherſon was born. I had at one time a conſiderable number of old poems, ſome of them part of what Macpherſon has tranſlated; but by lending them from hand to hand, I cannot now poſſibly trace

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them out. The truth is, I loſt in a great degree that enthuſiaſm which I was very early poſſeſſed with, when I went into Angusſhire, with a view to ſettle there for life. At that time I gave away moſt of the pieces I had collected.'

LITERAL TRANSLATION OF OSSIAN'S ADDRESS TO THE SUN IN CARRICKTHURA.

'Haſt thou left the blue journey of the ſkies, O! thou ſun without fault, of the yellow-golden locks? To thee are the doors of the night, and the tabernacle of thy reſt in the weſt. The waves come ſlowly around, to view the one of the brighteſt face, lifting with fear their heads; when they behold thy beauty while aſleep, they fly without ſtrength from thy ſide. Take thou thy reſt, O ſun! and return again with joy.' *

LITERAL TRANSLATION OF OSSIAN'S ADDRESS TO THE SUN IN CARTHON.

'O! thou who travelleſt above, round as the full-orbed hard ſhield of the mighty! whence is thy brightneſs

* Haſt thou left thy blue courſe in heaven, golden-haired ſon of the ſky! The weſt has opened its gates; the bed of thy repoſe is there. The waves come to behold thy beauty. They lift their trembling heads. They ſee thee lovely in thy ſleep; they ſhrink away with fear. Reſt in thy ſhadowy cave, O ſun! Let thy return be in joy. *Macpherſ. Tranſ.*

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brightneſs without frown, thy light that is laſting, O ſun? Thou comeſt forth in thy powerful beauty, and the ſtars hide their courſe; the moon, without ſtrength, goeth from the ſky, hiding herſelf under a wave in the weſt. Thou art in thy journey alone; who is ſo bold as to come nigh thee? The oak falleth from the high mountain, the rock and the precipice fall under old age; the ocean ebbeth and floweth, the moon is loſt above in the ſky; but thou alone for ever in victory, in the rejoicing of thy own light. When the ſtorm darkeneth around the world, with fierce thunder, and piercing lightnings, thou lookeſt in thy beauty from the noiſe, ſmiling in the troubled ſky!—To me is thy light in vain, as I can never ſee thy countenance; though thy yellow golden locks are ſpread on the face of the clouds in the eaſt; or when thou trembleſt in the weſt, at thy duſky doors in the ocean.—Perhaps thou and myſelf are at one time mighty, at another feeble, our years ſliding down from the ſkies, quickly travelling together to their end. Rejoice then, O ſun! while thou art ſtrong, O king! in thy youth. Dark and unpleaſant is old age, like the vain and feeble light of the moon, while ſhe looks through a cloud on the field, and her grey miſt on the ſides of the rocks; a blaſt from the north on the plain, a traveller in diſtreſs, and he ſlow *.'

This

* O thou that rolleſt above, round as the ſhield of my fathers! Whence are thy beams, O ſun! thy everlaſting light? Thou

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This 'Addreſs to the Sun in *Carthon*' the Committee was the more ſolicitous to procure, and to lay before the Society, becauſe it was one which ſome of the oppoſers of the authenticity of Oſſian's poems had quoted as evidently ſpurious, betraying the moſt convincing marks of its being a cloſe imitation of the addreſs to the ſun in *Milton*.

The Committee will quote another extract from this publication of Dr Smith's, which exhibits a tenderneſs of a different kind. It is part of the lamentation of *Graine*, on the death of her lover *Dargo*, ſuppoſed by her to have been killed by a boar.

'Mar

comeſt forth in thy awful beauty; the ſtars hide themſelves in the ſky; the moon, cold and pale, ſinks in the weſtern wave. But thou thyſelf moveſt alone; who can be a companion of thy courſe? The oaks of the mountains fall; the mountains themſelves decay with years; the ocean ſhrinks and grows again; the moon herſelf is loſt in heaven: but thou art for ever the ſame; rejoicing in the brightneſs of thy courſe. When the world is dark with tempeſts; when thunder rolls, and lightning flies; thou lookeſt in thy beauty from the clouds, and laugheſt at the ſtorm. But to Oſſian, thou lookeſt in vain; for he beholds thy beams no more; whether thy yellow hair flows on the eaſtern clouds, or thou trembleſt at the gates of the weſt. But thou art perhaps, like me, for a ſeaſon; thy years will have an end. Thou ſhalt ſleep in thy clouds, careleſs of the voice of the morning. Exult then, O ſun, in the ſtrength of thy youth! Age is dark and unlovely; it is like the glimmering light of the moon, when it ſhines through broken clouds, and the miſt is on the hills; the blaſt of north is on the plain, the traveller ſhrinks in the midſt of his journey. *Macpherſ. Tranſ.*

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'Mar dhà lus ſinn ſan drùchd ri gàire,
Taobh na creige 'm blàs na grèine;
Gun fhreumh air bith ach an aon,
Aig an dà lus aobhach aoibhinn.
Shèun òighean Chaothain na luis;
Is boidheach, leo fein, am fàs!
Sheun is na haighean ea-tom,
Ge d' thug an torc do aon diu 'm bàs.
Is trom trom, 's a cheann air aoma',
'N aon lus faoin tha fathaſd beo,
Mar dhuilleach air ſearga ſa ghrein;
—O b' aoibhinn bhi nis gun deo!'

'Like two plants ſmiling in the dew,
By the ſide of the rock in the warmth of the ſun,
With undivided root,
But the two plants happy and joyful.
The maids of *Caothan* forbore to hurt the plants;
Beautiful to them was their growth!
The light hinds alſo ſpared them,
But the boar gave one of them its death.
Heavy, heavy, with bending head,
Is the one weakly plant which is ſtill alive,
Like the bud wither'd under the ſun.—
O! happy were it to be without life!'

The original adds to the tenderneſs of the ſentiment the plaintive ſoftneſs of beautiful verſe. But this is only to the ear of the Gaelic ſcholar; one unacquainted with that language, who looks on the written Gaelic, and ſees the number of conſonants (mute or merely aſpirate in the pronunciation) with which

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which its orthography is loaded, ſmiles at being told, that its verſes poſſeſs any melody or ſoftneſs.

There is, in one of the poems of Dr Smith's collection, a paſſage which the Committee cannot reſiſt adding to thoſe already given, from its exemplifying, in a remarkable manner, the natural appearances, on which the melancholy ſuperſtition of the inhabitants of a mountainous country, in ſuch a ſtate of ſociety and manners as the poems in queſtion exhibit, might found their mythology, if it may be ſo called, of the ghoſts of their anceſtors and departed friends. It is contained in the opening of a poem called 'Finan and Lorma,' where the young people around him, looking on the heavens, addreſs the aged Oſſian in the following natural and beautiful verſes, of which the original will be found in the Appendix, p. 187.

The literal tranſlation is as follows:

'The mountain, O bard! is bright,
And the ſhadow of the moon is in *Coathan**;
The ghoſts of the mountain ſpeak,
And the voice of a ſpirit is in the fold of the wind.
But it is a different appearance that draws our attention—
Two clouds that hover in the hoſt of night;
They move over Alva of roes,
While their locks are ſpread on the gale of the mountain.

With

* A river ſo called, running through *Glean Caothan*, or the *Vale of Cona*, as it has been poetically rendered.

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With one of them, darkly ſeen, are his two dogs,
And his dim bow of yew is bent.—
From the ſide of the virgin comes a coloured ſtream,
Her robe is red, and her countenance mournful.—
Keep off, O wind!
Till we behold the form of the two:
Do not roll them together in thy embrace,
Nor ſcatter their beauty on the void.—
Over the vale of ruſhes and the hill of hinds,
They travel in the wandering of the miſt.
Aged bard of the times which have paſſed!
Who were they, when alive?'

'The years [anſwers Oſſian] that were, have returned.
My ſoul is full of their ſong,
Like the ſoft ſound of diſtant waves
In the ſeaſon of calm.—Their ſteps are near me.—
Children of Morna! lovely to me is your ſong;
Long has its ſound been abſent from the harps of Selma.'

And then he proceeds to relate the tragical ſtory of theſe children of Morna.

The Committee will now proceed to give the Society an account of materials which itſelf has acquired, for elucidating the queſtions which the Society committed to its inquiry.

To the ſet of queries before mentioned, circulated through ſuch parts of the Highlands as the Committee imagined moſt likely to afford information in reply to them, they received a good many anſwers, moſt of which were conceived in nearly ſimilar terms;

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terms; that the perſons themſelves had never doubted of the exiſtence of ſuch poems as Mr Macpherſon had tranſlated: that they had heard many of them repeated in their youth: that liſtening to them was the favourite amuſement of Highlanders, in the hours of leiſure or of idleneſs; but that, ſince the Rebellion 1745, the manners of the people had undergone a change ſo unfavourable to the recitation of theſe poems, that it was now an amuſement ſcarcely known, and that very few perſons remained alive who were able to recite them. That many of the poems they had formerly heard were ſimilar in ſubject and ſtory, as well as in the names of the heroes mentioned in them, to thoſe tranſlated by Mr Macpherſon: that his tranſlation ſeemed, to ſuch as had read it, a very able one; but that it did not by any means come up to the force or energy of the original;—to ſuch as had read it;—for his book was by no means univerſally poſſeſſed or read among Highlanders even accuſtomed to reading, who conceived that his tranſlation could add but little to their amuſement, and not at all to their conviction, in a matter which they had never doubted. A few of the Committee's correſpondents ſent them ſuch ancient poems as they poſſeſſed in writing, from having formerly taken them down from the oral recitation of the old Highlanders who were in uſe to recite them, or as they now took them down from ſome perſon, whom a very advanced period of life, or a particular connexion with ſome reciter of the old ſchool, enabled ſtill to retain them in his memory;

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ry; but thoſe, the Committee's correſpondents ſaid, were generally leſs perfect, and more corrupted, than the poems they had formerly heard, or which might have been obtained at an earlier period.

In anſwer to one of the queries, ſeveral of the Committee's correſpondents mentioned the names of various places in their neighbourhood, tending to ſhew the univerſal ancient traditionary belief of the exiſtence of Fingal and his heroes. Among many others were enumerated the well known cave of *Staffa*, firſt made known by the deſcription of Sir Joſeph Banks—the whirlpool or gulf ſet down in Bleau's Atlas Scotiæ, publiſhed A. D. 1662, called *Coire Fhinn M'Cowl*, or the Whirlpool of Fion, ſon of Comhal,—and the hill in the Iſle of Sky, known by the name of *Ait suidh Fhinn*, or Fingal's Seat. Indeed there are few diſtricts in the north-weſt of Scotland where ſuch inſtances may not be found.

A ſource of information to which your Committee early applied, was the executors of Mr Macpherſon, of whom they requeſted to know if he had left behind him any of thoſe MSS. particularly thoſe ancient books which the Committee underſtood he poſſeſſed. Mr John Mackenzie of the Temple, London, whom, as has been above mentioned, Mr Macpherſon had left ſole truſtee for the purpoſe of publiſhing the originals of Oſſian, informed the Committee, that, after a ſtrict ſearch, no ſuch books could be found, and that the manuſcripts left by Mr Macpherſon were not ancient, but thoſe of the handwriting of himſelf, or of others whom he had employed

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ployed to take down the poetry from the recitation of Highlanders, or to copy it from the MSS. with which he had been furniſhed. Of the books of which the Committee had ſo often heard, only one was recovered, a ſmall duodecimo manuſcript, of which the Committee will preſently give ſome account; but that ſeveral larger books, much more ancient, and of a quite different nature, had been once in Mr Macpherſon's poſſeſſion, the Committee had very ſatisfactory evidence *. The only one which has been yet diſcovered is of very little value; whether its inſignificance, or any other circumſtance, contributed to its preſervation, the Committee will not venture to decide. This little book is a thin duodecimo volume, apparently mutilated, for its firſt page is marked 35, which appears to have been a collection of proſe treatiſes, ſome poems and ſongs, chiefly Gaelic, but one Engliſh, (a well known ſatirical ſong againſt Biſhop Burnet, which the political principles of its owner might lead him to value), made for his own uſe by one of the *M'Vuirichs*, hereditary bards to the family of Clanronald. This book, with two or three others, which, according to the deſcription of gentlemen who had ſeen them, appeared, from their

* See evidence of Ewan Macpherſon and Malcolm Macpherſon, App. No. 6; and of Lachlan M'Vuirich, App. p. 275. Letter from Mr Angus M'Neil, miniſter of Hopemore, to Dr Blair, in the App. No. 1. p. 18. Mr Macpherſon's own letter to Mr M'Laggan, dated 27th October 1760, App. No. 10. and Mr Gallie's letter, p. 30. of this Report.

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their illuminated writing and more ſplendid binding, of greater note and eſteem than it, were received by Mr Macpherſon from the then Mr M'Donald of *Clanronald*, at the time that he was collecting the poems he afterwards publiſhed. Theſe MSS. the late Mr M'Donald of Clanronald, ſon and heir of him from whom Mr Macpherſon received them, was very anxious to recover from that gentleman; and, after ſome ineffectual correſpondence, actually gave directions to Mr William M'Donald, late ſecretary, and now treaſurer to this Society, to bring an action for their recovery. This, however, Mr M'Donald wiſhed extremely to avoid, and did not therefore obey the inſtructions of his employer for that purpoſe, underſtanding that Mr Macpherſon would return the MSS. without ſuch compulſory means, when the purpoſe for which he kept them was fully accompliſhed. After Mr Macpherſon's death, the ſmall volume above mentioned, being the only one found by his executors, was returned to Clanronald's family. The Committee, from a principle of fairneſs and candour, of which they hope the Society will approve, communicated this little book, with ſeveral other letters and papers, the only material documents they had at that time, to Mr *Laing*, who, the Committee underſtood, was then writing an eſſay on the authenticity of the poems aſcribed to Oſſian, which he has ſince publiſhed. That gentleman, in a note to his eſſay, has mentioned the communication of this book, which he ſuppoſes to be the *Red Book*, or *Leabhar dearg*, as it is termed in Gaelic,

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which has been often mentioned in the Highlands as containing a valuable collection of ancient poetry; but beſides that, the unimportance of this little volume agrees very ill with the eſtimation always attached, in that part of the country, to the *Leabhar dearg*, it would appear, from the teſtimony of Ewan Macpherſon above mentioned, (*vide* Appendix, p. 97.) that the book ſo denominated was of a form and ſize very different from the ſmall volume in queſtion; and in this agrees the declaration of L. M'Vuirich, (Appendix, p. 275.) though they differ as to the immediate channel through which Mr Macpherſon received this particular book.

One of Mr Macpherſon's executors, in the country, the Reverend Mr Anderſon, miniſter of Kinguſie, was extremely attentive to the inquiries of the Committee. He ſent to it various teſtimonies, from old Highlanders in his neighbourhood, relating to the ſubject of thoſe inquiries; and, after informing the Committee that all Mr Macpherſon's papers, manuſcripts and collections, relating to the poetry of Oſſian, were in London, he tranſmitted, as the only thing he had in his poſſeſſion which had any relation to that ſubject, an exact copy of certain notes or memorandums, written, in Mr Macpherſon's hand, upon the margin of a copy of the firſt edition of his tranſlation of Oſſian, which had been left at Mr Macpherſon's Highland reſidence, and which Mr Anderſon found there. Theſe are as follows:

Margin

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Margin marked as under, in Mr Macpherson's hand-writing.	
Delivered the 3 Duans of Cathloda to Mr Jno. Mackenzie, as complete as the translation. J. M.	CATH-LODA.
Delivered the whole of Carrickthura to Mr Jno. Mackenzie. J. M.	CARRICKTHURA.
Delivered all that could be found of Carthon to Mr Jno. Mackenzie. J. M.	CARTHON. At the words, 'have not I seen the fallen Balclutha,' there is marked on the margin, in Mr Macpherson's hand, 'All before this given to Mr Mackenzie.'
Delivered the whole of Oina to Mr Jno. Mackenzie. J. M.	OINA MORUL.
Delivered the whole of Colna Dona to Mr J. Mackenzie. J. M.	COLNA DONA.
Delivered the whole of Croma to Mr Jno. Mackenzie. J. M.	CROMA.
The original of Calthon and Colmal given to Mr Jno. Mackenzie. J. M.	CALTHON & COLMAL.
The original of the poem of Fingal given to Mr Jno. Mackenzie. J. M.	FINGAL.

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Mr Anderſon, in the letter accompanying thoſe papers, mentioned, that he had a book containing ſome of Mr Macpherſon's juvenile poetry, or 'Eſſays in Engliſh verſe, which he never finiſhed for public inſpection, which Mr Anderſon did not conſider himſelf at liberty to bring out from that oblivion to which their author had conſigned them.' This letter having been, as above mentioned, put into the hands of Mr Laing, he wiſhed to ſee the book of juvenile poetry mentioned by Mr Anderſon. This wiſh, and its motive, Mr Laing expreſſed to Lord Bannatyne and Mr Mackenzie, two of the Committee, in the following letter, which they know he will pardon them for inſerting here, along with Mr Anderſon's in anſwer to it; of the candid and gentlemanlike ſtyle of which, Mr Laing expreſſed (and the Committee ſincerely agrees with him) his cordial approbation.

'My Lord,

'Having, in conſequence of different converſations with Mr Mackenzie and your Lordſhip, renounced the idea of publiſhing Mr Hume's two letters to Dr Blair, relative to Oſſian's poems, I underſtand that the Highland Society, in the courſe of the ſummer, are to publiſh, with theſe letters, Dr Blair's correſpondence on the ſubject entire, together with all the letters and other evidence which they have received on the authenticity of Oſſian's poems.

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poems. My deſign is to examine the evidence in a poſtſcript to the next edition of my diſſertation and hiſtory; but if the publication of the evidence, for which I have waited theſe two years, be delayed any longer, I conceive myſelf entitled to annex Mr Hume's letters to a new edition of my diſſertation next winter.

From the following paſſages in Mr Hume's letters, your Lordſhip muſt be ſenſible that an unreſerved publication of the whole correſpondence, not only with Dr Blair, but with the Highland Society, becomes abſolutely indiſpenſable. "I think it were ſuitable to your candour, and moſt ſatisfactory alſo to the reader, to publiſh all the anſwers to all the letters you write, even though ſome of theſe anſwers ſhould make ſomewhat againſt your own opinion in this affair. We ſhall always be the more aſſured that no arguments are ſtrained beyond their proper force, and no contrary arguments ſuppreſſed, where ſuch an entire communication is made to us." "I cannot conceive any objection which a man even of the graveſt character could have to your publication of his letters, which will only atteſt a plain fact known to him." After theſe paſſages, a partial or mutilated account of the correſpondence would diſcredit the whole, and the objection to Dr Blair's Appendix would ſubſiſt in full force, that inſtead of publiſhing the evidence as he received it, he gave a partial abſtract, tinged unavoidably with his own prejudices and preconceived belief. No man is entitled to give his evidence, who objects to the letter

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itſelf being publiſhed, in which his evidence is contained; and how much ſoever many of the letters may ſeem to be a mere repetition of others, or to contain no evidence whatever, their publication is not the leſs neceſſary, as negative evidence with reſpect to the authenticity becomes poſitive evidence with reſpect to the forgery of the poems.

Among the letters which I have ſeen, there is one from Mr Anderſon of the Dell of Kinguſſie, or King's Huntley, intimating, in anſwer to the inquiries of the Highland Society, that he had a book in his poſſeſſion, containing Mr Macpherſon's firſt eſſays in Engliſh poetry, which he did not chooſe, or conceive himſelf at liberty to reſcue from that oblivion to which the author ſeemed to have conſigned it. Now my Lord, whether this MS. volume be Macpherſon's poetical common-place book, containing thoſe claſſical quotations which he transferred to his Oſſian, or whether it contain his original Engliſh poetry, ſuch important evidence ought not to be ſuppreſſed. Nothing has appeared more ſatisfactory to impartial men, unconnected with the Highlands, than the diſcovery of a prior epic poem by Macpherſon, containing the ſame ſentiments, imagery, and expreſſions with his Oſſian; and as the ſame reſemblance may be traced in his leſſer poems, lately publiſhed from the Scots Magazine, I am entitled to conclude, that thoſe firſt eſſays of his muſe in Engliſh, if fairly produced, would afford the ſame convincing detections of Oſſian. It is in vain to ſay that Mr Anderſon is not at liberty to produce

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produce the book which Mr Macpherſon ſeemed deſirous to conſign to oblivion. Having arraigned Macpherſon at the bar of the public, as one of the firſt literary impoſtors in modern times, I have impoſed an oppoſite obligation on his friends to vindicate and reſcue his memory, if they can, from the imputation of forgery; after which no reaſon can be aſſigned for withholding the book, but that it would ſerve for his conviction. Such is the plain ſtate of the fact; and if his friends are not at liberty to produce the book, the only circumſtance that could ſuppoſe an obligation to ſuppreſs it, is, that it would ſerve for his detection. Very poſſibly it contains nothing to the purpoſe; but the book would have been produced long ago, had it afforded a ſingle proof of the authenticity of Oſſian; and, in the impartial publications of the Highland Society, no part of the evidence ſhould appear to be ſuppreſſed.

I do not mean by this, that the book itſelf ſhould be publiſhed, but that it ſhould be tranſmitted to the Highland Society for public inſpection; otherwiſe I muſt conclude that a part of the evidence, the moſt injurious to Macpherſon, has been withheld by his friends. I am, my Lord, with reſpect and eſteem, your Lordſhip's moſt obedient humble ſervant,

MALCOLM LAING.'

Queen Street,
30th March 1802.

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'SIR, *Killihuntly, 30th May*, 1802.

'I have to apologize for having delayed so long to answer your favour of the 11th of April, respecting Mr Laing's application for the manuscript poems of the late Mr James Macpherson, in my possession; but circumstances not necessary to mention put it out of my power to make the proper reply to you sooner.

From principle, and from inclination, I am a friend to truth, and to liberal and ingenious inquiry; and, so far from having any wish to withhold information from Mr Laing on this subject, I should willingly aid him in his researches, were it in my power to do so, whilst he investigates the question with the learning of a scholar, and the candour of a gentleman. Without wishing to take any share in a subject of dispute on which I have long formed a decided opinion for myself, I transmit you the manuscript by my young friend Mr George Macpherson, Invereshie, to be used as you please. I believe it can throw no light on the subject; but you can best judge whether it is proper to be communicated to Mr Laing or otherwise. Had it been either given to me confidentially, or come into my hands as one of Mr Macpherson's executors, it should never have been produced by me; but I feel no reluctance in giving it up to you, as accident alone put it in my possession, many years before I had any acquaint-

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ance with Mr Macpherſon. I have the honour to be, Sir, with very ſincere eſteem, your faithful and moſt obedient ſervant,

J. ANDERSON.'

Henry Mackenzie, Esq.

The MS. which accompanied Mr Anderſon's letter was ſtitched in the form of a very ſmall memorandum book, and conſiſted of two poems; one on *Death*, and another, a ſort of heroic poem, in ſeveral cantos, written, as appeared from ſome memorandums on one of its leaves, by Mr Macpherſon, when he taught a ſchool in Badenoch. It contained no evidence of the forgery of Oſſian, which Mr Laing ſuſpected, nor indeed any other evidence connected with this ſubject, except in ſo far as it ſhewed Mr Macpherſon to have been, as he ſays himſelf in one of his prefaces, an early apprentice to the muſes. To ſhew what he had then acquired in ſuch apprenticeſhip, a ſpecimen of each poem is annexed in the Appendix, No. 6.

Mr Macpherſon's papers (called by him the original of Oſſian), above deſcribed, were left, as has been ſaid to Mr John Mackenzie, for the purpoſe of publication; and it is now underſtood will be publiſhed, as ſoon as ſome preliminary difficulties can be overcome.

The

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The MSS. which the Committee obtained from the other correſpondents above alluded to, were various copies or editions (as they may be called) of the poems of Oſſian, or poems in imitation of Oſſian, now in moſt common circulation in the Highlands. They were chiefly collected in the Weſtern Highlands and iſlands, and frequently appeared to be the ſame poems, but in ſome of the copies with conſiderable variations, and what appeared to be corruptions, with thoſe current in Ireland; ſome of which Miſs Brooke, the lady herein before mentioned, publiſhed, with a metrical tranſlation. A good many pieces, ſeemingly of a purer ſort, though always with a mixture of rude, and ſometimes unintelligible paſſages, were ſent to the Society by Mr M'Laggan, miniſter of Blair in Athole, Sir George Mackenzie of Coull, and Sir J. Sinclair, Barts.; the Reverend Mr Sage of Kildonnan, in Sutherland, Mr M'Donald of Staffa, General M'Kay, Archibald Fletcher * in Achalladar, Glenorchy, Mr Peter M'Farlane of Perth, the Reverend Mr Malcolm M'Donald in Tarbert of Cantyre, Captain M'Donald of Brackiſh, and the Reverend Mr Stewart, miniſter of Craigniſh.

Major M'Lachlan of Kilbride, on the application of one of the Committee (Lord Bannatyne), was ſo obliging as to communicate part of a very large collection of MSS. made by an anceſtor of his, chiefly

* Fletcher was himſelf the reciter, and from his recitation, as he could not write them, the poems which he ſent to the Society were taken down. (*Vide* his affidavit, App. No. 16.)

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chiefly in Ireland and the adjoining coaſt of Argyllſhire. A ſhort hiſtory of this collection, and of the manner in which Lord Bannatyne firſt became acquainted with it, is contained in a letter from his Lordſhip to Mr Mackenzie, given in the Appendix, p. 280. An account of its contents, by Dr D. Smith, is ſubjoined (Appendix, p. 285.), together with a *fac ſimile* of a paſſage in the oldeſt of the MSS. This collection, however curious in itſelf, and as exhibiting the early ſtate of writing in the Highlands, contains but little ancient poetry, and ſome of what it does contain appears to be very much corrupted.

Lord Bannatyne, by whoſe means Major Mac-Lachlan's MSS. were communicated to the Committee, alſo procured for them another MS. apparently of great antiquity, pronounced by the late Mr William Robertſon, keeper of the Regiſter Office at Edinburgh, to be a writing of the 13th century. It bears no date, however, in its extant contents; but on the cover is a date, written in Gaelic, in black letter, but in a comparatively modern hand, which agrees with Mr Robertſon's opinion. 'Glenmaſan, the 15th day of the [a ſpace illegible, by the wearing of the parchment] of M*** [a ſimilar ſpace] in the year of our Redemption 1238.' This MS. contains part of the poem of 'Clan Uiſneachan,' called by Macpherſon, from the lady who makes the principal figure in it, *Darthula*; but her name in Gaelic, thus lengthened and made muſical by Macpherſon, is *Deirdir*. A particular account of this MS. with

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with the original of that paſſage, and a literal tranſlation, is given by Dr Donald Smith, in the Appendix, NO. 19; to which is ſubjoined, a *fac simile* of the writing of the MS. This paſſage coincides very nearly with three ſtanzas of the edition of *Clann Uisnech*, as publiſhed by *Gillies*, in his collection, p. 265.

But the largeſt and moſt valuable collection of manuſcripts, in the poſſeſſion of the Society, was preſented to it, on the application of this Committee, by the *Highland Society of London*. One of theſe belonged to the Reverend James M'Gregor, dean of Liſmore, the metropolitan church of the ſee of Argyll, as aſcertained by an inſcription on the MS. itſelf. It appears, from dates affixed to it, to have been written at different periods, from 1512 to 1529. It contains more than 11,000 verſes of Gaelic poetry, compoſed at different periods, from the time of our more ancient bards, down to the beginning of the 16th century. Among the more ancient are poems of Conal, ſon of Edirſkeol, Oſſian, ſon of Fingal, Fergus Fili (Fergus the Bard), and Caoilt, ſon of Ronan, the friends and cotemporaries of Oſſian. Of the modern poets, whoſe works are here preſerved, the moſt illuſtrious are Sir Duncan Campbell of Glenurchay, who fell in the battle of Flodden, and Lady Iſabel Campbell, daughter of the Earl of Argyle, afterwards married to Gilbert Earl of Caſſilis. Of this collection alſo, Dr D. Smith has furniſhed the Committee with an account, which the Society will find in the above mentioned

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mentioned NO. of the Appendix, p. 385. Three of the poems in this collection the Committee thinks it will be ſatisfactory to the Society, as well as to the public, to inſert here, as the title of the two firſt bears them to be the compoſition of Oſſian, and that of the laſt aſcribes it to Fergus the Bard, the brother of Oſſian.

A Houdir so Ossin. *

Is fadda noght ni nelli fruim
Is fadda lwiym in nycheith ryir
In lay dew gay fadda yoth
Dl bi lor fadda in lay de
Fadda lwiym gych lay ya dik
Ne mir ſen di cleachta doimh
Gin deowir gin damych cath
Gin wea feylim claſs a lwith
Gin nenych gin thoill gin threire
Gir fronich crewi gin gnewe gray
Gin deilleith allamaib yoir
Wea gin neilli gin oill fley
Gin chin er ſwrri na er ſelgi
In da cherd rey in royth mi veene
Gin dwlle in glaew no in gayth
* * * [one line not intelligible.]

Gin

* In explanation of the particular orthography of this MS. ſee Dr Smith's account of it, in the Appendix, p. 300.

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Gin wraith er ellit no er feygh
No hewle feyve wine in lon
Gin loegh er chonvert na er chon
Is fadda noght ni nelli *.'

English is as follows :

The Author of this is Ossian.

' Long do the clouds this night ſurround me—
Long to me was the night that is paſt—
For the day that is come I have longed—
While ſlowly rolled the day before.
Tedious to me is each day that comes,
For it is not as it was wont !
Gone are the heroes, my friends in war,
And feats of ſtrength are no longer performed :
Generoſity, the will and the deed have failed.
Sad is my heart without an object for its love,
Nor power to avenge the feeble.
Hoſpitality and the drink of the feaſt are no more ;
No more the love of the fair or of the chace,
In which I was wont to take delight.
On the ſword or the dart I no longer rely.
I do not come up with the hind or the hart,
Nor do I traverſe the hills of the elk.
I hear not of hounds nor their deeds.
The night of clouds to me is long !

A

* Extracted from p. 50. of the MS. as it is now numbered.

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A Howdir soo Ossein.

Annit doif ſkayle beg er Finn
Ne ſkayl nac· ewrre in fuym a
Err vac Cowle fa ma·t ghelle
Fa cowinſey ra me ray
Di wamyn beggane Sloyeg·
Ag Eſs royg· ny negg·in mawle
Di chemyn fa holt yr lerr
Currych mor agus ben ann
Keigyt Leich yownych mane Reic·
Fa mat· er gneeit· er gyc gart
Ffir yar neſh is marg a cheith
Di youmiſt er gi teir nere
Derrymir wlli gi dane
Ach Finn ne waene agus Gowle
Dethow churrych fa hard keym
Wa na reym ſkoltyt ny downe
Ne yarnyt tám· na tocht
Gir yoyve calle ſi phort ynaa
Ych techt doy her in neſs
Derre aſs maccayve mnaa
Gilli a darli no ſyth yraane
Is ſeir mayne no ſyt dalwe
In nynir hanyk in gane
Di waymin feyn rompyt ſorwe
Heg chuggyn gow pupbill Finn
Is baneis gi grin doyt
Reggir Mackowle na heme
In bannow beinn gin toyt
Darrit in Reic· fa math drac·
Gi hard di neyn dath ylane

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Ca trawe as danyk in waen
Toywir ſkaylli gi gar rowne
Neyn may Re heir fa hwne
Inneſit gyc croen my yoyllen
Ne elli trawe fa neyin grane
Nar earis feyn di Leich feal
A Reichyin hwlle gi royd
A neyn oyk is math dalwe
In toſga fa dangis in gune
Tawir is doyt pen gi ſarve
Mi chomrych ort maſs tow Finn
Di rae rinn in makcayve mna
Daywis towrloy ryt is di loye
Gove mi chomre gi loyt tra
Darrit in Reie fa math ſiſs
Sko neich in niſs ta terr a hee
Goym rayd chomre a wen
Er gi far ya will in greith
Tay la feic a teeht er murri
Leic is mat gal er mi lorg
Mak Re ni Sorthir is gear erme
Is do fa hamn in Dyre borb
Di churris geſſi no chemn
Gi berri Finn may err Saylle
Is nach beein aggi mir wnee
Gar wat a ynee is a awg e
Di raye os gir gi gloir mir
Far ſin di choſke gi reic
Gin gar feir Finn di yeſs
Ne rach tow leſh mir wneit
Di chemyn techt her ſtead
Leich ſi wayd oſs gi far
Sowle ni farga gi dane
Si nwle chadni yoyve a wen
Clokgit tenn teyg ne ma chenne
Fa nar nau heme is nar chlea
Skaa yrwmny yow er a yeſs

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A drinnlin cleſs er a claa
Clawe trome tortoyl nac· gann
Gi tenn er teive in irr vor
A gymirt claſs oſſi chind
Is a techt in genni tloy
Ya woneiſs yaſg gî moya
A ſeſſow in gawlow ſkay
Er nert er ·gaſk er yelle
Ne elli fer mir ac· ſay
Naill flat· agus roſc Reic·
In genn in ir fa keyve crow
Mat· in noyth is fa gall a yayd
Is loayt· a ſtayd no gi frow
Tanik in ſtead fin in deir
Sin far nar weine ris in nayne
Keigit Leich wemir ann
Yonyt ra hynſyth gar nar
Is er eggil in nir is a heyck
Ne royve Leich yein gan yrane
Di twne mir hanik in deir
Darrit in Reich fa math clw
In nathni tow feyn a wen
In na ſowd in fer a der tow
Hanneym Vic Coulle a Yne
Is fowir linn a yi tane
Targi ſay meis wra leſh
Ga mat· di threſh a Inne ayllé
Derre Oſkir agus Gowle
Bi worb coſkir lonn in gath
Nane ſeſſow in gar in tloyc
Eddir in far mor ſi Flaat·
Hanik in Leich bi wat· tlacht
Lay feic is lay nart no genn
Agus foddeis woyn in ven
Di we gar a yolin Inn
Tuk mac Morn in turchir dane
Gi croy no yey din tleyg·

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Neir anni in turchir nar hay
Ya ſkey gin danny da wlyg·*
Di yrwt Gowle in nagni vir
Gw leddirt in ir in gor roit·
Ga bea chewit· ead in fin
Bi yarve in gell is in gloa
Horchir mac Morn la i lawe
Mac Re ni Sorthir ſtayfle mor
Is markg treyve in danik in ven
Fa hut in far in gar yloa
Is er tuttwm in ir wor
I gar yi choyn croy in keme
Di we neyn Re heir fa hwne
Bleyg·ni ag Finn an fy· nane
Aelegir aggin ag in eſs
Fer bi wat· treſſhi is gneive
Is currir fay wrayt gi moyeir
Fane oyr in nonnoyr mi Reich.' †

* Two ſeveral readings now occur for ten lines of the MS. which, as they are inconſiſtent with one another, ſo are they alſo with the tenor of the poem. For whereas fifty were repeatedly ſtated to be the exact number of warriors who accompanied Fingal on this occaſion, yet in the firſt of theſe readings, twenty-ſeven only are ſaid to have engaged Dayro, who bound them; though it is added immediately after, that all the warriors then preſent were wounded, and Flan ſon of Morni ſlain by him. And in the ſecond of the readings, fifty warriors are repreſented as ſaving their companions from the ſword of Dayro, by a ſeaſonable exertion of valour.

† Extracted from MS. p. 220-222.

Engliſh

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Engliſh Tranſlation.

The Author of this is Oſſian.

Know ye a ſhort tale of Fingal!
A tale that claims your attention.
It concerns the ſon of Comhal of powerful ſway;
Whom, while I live, I ſhall in woe remember.
We were few in his train,
By the fall of Roya, that ſoftly murmurs,
When we ſaw a large ſailed boat afar,
Which conveyed a fair over ocean.
Fifty alert heroes ſat around the king;
Truſty were their deeds in ſupport of right,
How unlike, alas! are they whom I behold in your ſtead,
O ye, whoſe ſtrength could controul each land!
We all ſtood up in haſte,
Except Fingal himſelf, and Gaul,
To wait on the high bounding boat,
Whoſe courſe was parting the waves,
It neither ſlackened nor reſted,
Till it entered our wonted haven,
It croſſed the pool below the fall,
When out of it roſe a daughter of youth.
Brighter ſhe ſhone than a beam of the ſun;
Her air and manner exceeded her form.
In preſence of the fair, who came from afar,
We all reſpectful ſtood,
She proceeds to the tent of Fingal,
And greets him in muſical accent.
The ſon of Comhal made ſuitable reply,

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In terms of her ſoft greeting.
The king of aſpect mild enquired aloud,
From what quarter the fair complexioned maid had come,
Or what land ſhe had left for that of Fingal?
—"Give us briefly your report"
"Daughter I am to the king of the wave-ſurrounded land;
Its groves proclaim my tearful moans.
But of all the lands which the ſun ſurrounds in his courſe,
Thine of the generous brave is that which I ſought."
"Princeſs of the eaſy gait!
Young maid of the perfect form!
The purpoſe on which you came from afar,
Declare, though to me it be bitter."
"Thy ſupport I claim, if thou art Fingal;"
(Said the maid addreſſing us,)
"For the excellence of thy kingly mien and fame,
Vouchſafe me ſpeedily and ſeaſonably thy protection."
"Who," (ſaid the king who knew afar),
"Is the perſon that now purſues you?
My protection, O maid! ſhall be your defence
Againſt all who dare."
"There comes with wrath over ſea,
A warrior renowned for might in purſuit of me;
The ſon of the king of Sora's land, of keen arms,
Whoſe name is Dayro Borb.
To his ſuit I oppoſed a vow,
That Fingal ſhould receive me from off the ſea,
And that I ſhould never be his ſpouſe,
Though great were his deeds, and high his fame."
Briefly replied, with determined voice,
He who could check each king,
"Until the men of Fingal break thy vow,
His ſpouſe thou ſhalt not be."
We ſee advancing on the wave
A warrior whoſe ſtature none could equal,
Travelling the ſea with ſpee[illegible]
In the very direction the maid had come.

A.

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A cloſe helmet burniſhed round the head
Of the dauntleſs man of ſtrength;
A black-ribbed ſhield on his arm,
Whoſe field was marked with figured ſports.
A huge and maſſy ſword
Was fixed on the ſide of the mighty,
Over whoſe hilt he ſportful exerciſed,
As he approached our people.
Two javelins, winged with death,
Stood in the hollow of his ſhield.
For ſtrength, for proweſs, and for might,
The hero matchleſs ſeemed.
A noble air and king-like eye
Marked his manly face;
Freſh was his bloom, and white his teeth,
As he rode the ſounding ſurge in his ſpeed.
To land he bounded in his courſe,
Nor did he regard the proffer of Fingal.
Our fifty heroes then preſent,
Whoſe deaths were in his ſoul,
Dreaded the fate of the man ſo bold of deed,
Nor was there a hero of us untroubled in thought.
Off his wave as he came to land,
The far famed king did aſk,
"Do you know, O maid,
If that be the man you ſpoke of?"
"I do know, ſon of Comhal; O Fingal!
Much harm, I fear, he will do thy people;
He will attempt to bear me away,
Though great be thy might, generous Fingal."
Oſcar * and Gaul ſtarted from their place,
Heroes fierce and victorious in conflict,

* There were two heroes of the name of Oſcar, beſides Oſſian's ſon. The laſt is not the one here meant; for he is always diſtinguiſhed by ſome endearing or peculiar epithet, as *mo mhac ſein*, *Iomhuin*, *Og*, *Leige*, &c.

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And ſtood out from among the people,
Between the man of might and the king:
The warrior of portly form advanced
With wrath and with ſtrength toward them;
And, paſt us, he ruſhed on the maid,
As ſhe ſtood by the ſhoulder of Fingal.
The ſon of Morni gave an eager caſt
Of his firm ſpear, to ſtay him.
Nor weak was the caſt;
It parted his ſhield in twain.
Gaul of the glowing ſpirit ruſhed on,
To hew down the hero, who ſtood as a rock of ice.
Whoever ſhould then behold them,
Furious would ſeem the ſtrife of death.
The hand of Morni's ſon laid low
The king of Sora's ſon—tale of grief!
Sad were our people for the coming of the maid,
On whoſe account the hero fell in dread affray.
After the mighty had fallen
On ocean's ſtrand, O deed of woe!
The daughter of the king of the wave-ſurrounded land
Remained for a year in the land of Fingal.
We buried, by the ſide of the water-fall,
The man of might and of proweſs;
And we placed on the point of each finger
A ring of gold, in honour of the king. *

A Hoodir soo Farris Filli.

' Innis dowin a Erris
Ille Feyni Errin
Kynnis tarla yevni

In

* The original of the laſt four lines is given as a ſecond reading in the MS.

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In gath Yawrich ni beymin.
Ne math v. Kowle
Mo ſkael o cheth Yawrich
Cha war Oſkyr iavin
Hug mor coſk er chalmi
Cha warr ſeachta vee Kheilt
Na gaſſre fean alwe
Di hut oyk ni Feane
Inn in neyda arryth
Di marwe mc Lowych
Se vi mek ſin tathryc
Di hut oyk ni Halbin
Di marwe Feyn Brettin
Di hut mc Re Lethlin
Fa linnyth veith chonyth
Bi chre ſael farri
Bi lawe chalma in gonyth
Innis doif a Ille
Mac mo vec is marrwni
Kynnis di we Oſkyr
Skolta in gath warri.
Bi yekkir a innis
Di bi wor in nobbir
Ni royve marve ſin gath ſin
Hut la armow Oſkyr
Ne loyth eſs oyvni
Na ſeaywck re eltow
Na re bwnni ſroyth
Na Oſkyr ſin gath ſin.
Weith ſay ma yerri
Mir willith re trane yeith
Na mir chrann veaſs ewee
Si Wew gi a nauehee.
Mir chonnik Re Erria
Voa er lar a chaa
Hug Oſkir na chonew
Mir harwe twnni traa

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Mir chonnik ſen Carbre
Di chraa in tlye hantych
Gir chur treith a chind bir
Gir ba in cowwa cadna
Neir ympoo ſen Oſkir
Gin dranyth Re Errin
Gin dug beym gni deichill
Gir yeichin ay gairlyn
Bollis Art Mac Carbre
Er in darna bulli
Sawle a weith in ferr ſin
Si winn reith umi.
Smi Farris Filli
Dar hwil gych innis
Troyg· er eſh ni Femyth
Mi ſkeall re innis.' *

Engliſh Tranſlation.

The Author of this is Fergus the Bard.

' Tell us, Fergus,
Thou bard from Erin's heroes,
How it fared with our people
In the battle of Gavra of wounds.'
" Not good, ſon of Comhal,
Is my report from the battle of Gavra.
The beloved Oſcar will not ſurvive,
He who ſubdued the mighty.
Nor will the ſeven ſons of Caoilt,
A band terrible as an hoſt.

The

* Extracted from MS. p. 230-231.

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The young heroes of Fingal fell,
Adorned with a robe of fame.
The ſons of Louach fell,
The ſix ſons and the father.
The youth of Albion fell,
Slain are the heroes of Britain.
Fallen is the king of Lethlin's ſon,
Who always gave us his aid.
Generous and manly was his heart;
Strong, at all times, was his arm."
"But tell me, bard!
The ſon of my ſon, and of my loins,
Oſcar, how did he hew down the terrible battle?
It were hard to relate,
Great were the taſk to tell,
The numbers ſlain in that battle,
Who fell by the arms of Oſcar.
Not ſwifter the cataract of a river,
Nor a hawk darting on a flight of birds;
Not ſtronger the courſe of the foaming torrent,
Than Oſcar in that battle.
He was, at laſt,
Like a branch that oppoſes a furious wind,
Or like a tree which budding green
Reſiſts the ſtroke of the woodman.
When he perceived the king of Erin
In the midſt of his hoſt,
Forward Oſcar ruſhed,
As rolls a wave to the ſhore.
As Cairbar ſaw him approach,
He wielded his keen ſpear,
And pierced him through with its point—
Our chief cauſe of woe!
Nor yet did Oſcar turn,
But forward puſhed to Erin's king:
A wound with might he gave,
Which proved the ſtrength of his blade.

He

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He ſtruck Art the ſon of Cairbar
With the ſecond ſtroke.
So fell that hero,
Graced with his royal crown.
I am Fergus the bard,
Who have traverſed many lands:
Alas! that I ſurvive the heroes,
To relate the tale of woe!'

The Society will obſerve, that the ſecond of thoſe poems is the ſame ſtory with that called by Mr Macpherſon, in his tranſlation, the Maid of Craca, and the third is on the ſubject of the battle of Gavra, where Oſcar fell, an account of which makes the opening of Temora in Macpherſon. The tone of the firſt is ſad and ſolemn, and perfectly agrees with the traditionary belief as to the ſituation of Oſſian, when he ſurvived all the heroes of his race. It is ſcarcely neceſſary for the Committee to repeat, that theſe, and all the other tranſlations given in this Report, are ſtrictly literal, and muſt therefore be expected to convey to the mere Engliſh reader a very imperfect tranſcript only, either in point of force or tenderneſs, of the original.

The

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The Reverend Dr Smith of Campbelton having, in the introduction to his collection of ancient poems, (to which the Committee has made such particular reference above), mentioned, among other persons to whom he was indebted for originals, Mr *Duncan Kennedy*, then schoolmaster at Craignish in Argyllshire, for some time past resident in Glasgow, the Committee applied to him for a communication of such Gaelic poetry as he might have in his possession, which they had learned was considerable. After some correspondence, they purchased this collection from Mr Kennedy, and it is now in the possession of the Society. It is contained in three thin folio volumes, two of them written out fair from the various poems he had collected, at a pretty remote period, 30 years ago, when he was in a situation to enable, as well as to incline him, to make such a collection. He had valued it, as is natural to a man to whom the collection of any thing has been attended with much labour and difficulty, at a much higher rate than the world would probably have done, if he had published it; and he was offended with Dr Smith for having deprived him, as he conceived, of this valuable property, by publishing parts of what he had thus gotten from him, along with what he had procured from other Gaelic collectors. He did not then know, that so little at that particular time was this sort of poetry in favour with the public, that Dr Smith, notwithstanding the assistance he received from the Highland Society of London, was a considerable loser by his book; though, from the labours

of

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of that learned clergyman, his collation of many of Kennedy's, with copies of the ſame poems which he had procured, and the inſertion of many he had received from other hands, beſides thoſe of Mr Kennedy, it was rendered a much more intereſting volume than Kennedy's, had he publiſhed it, could have formed. Kennedy's collection, now in the poſſeſſion of this Society, conſiſts of the following poems, viz. Luachair Leothaid, Sgiathan mac Sgairbh, An Gruagach, Rochd, Sithallan, Mùr Bheura, Tiomban, Sealg na Cluana, Gleanncruadhach, Uirnigh Oiſein, Earragan, (reſembling Macpherſon's Battle of Lora), Manus, Maire Borb, (Maid of Craca), Cath Seiſear, Sliabh nam Beann fionn, Bas Dheirg, Bas Chuinn, Righ Liur, Sealg na Leana, Dun an Oir, An Cu dubh, Gleann Diamhair, Conal, Bas Chiuinlaich Diarmad, Carril, Bas Ghuill, (quite different from Smith's Death of Gaul), Garaibh, Bas Oſcair, (part of which is the ſame narrative with the opening of Macpherſon's *Temora*), in three parts; Tuiridh nam Fian, and Bas Oiſein. The laſt is a very beautiful and affecting poem, but it is debaſed by a pretty long paſſage, which ſeems evidently an interpolation, containing a vulgar piece of ribaldry put into the mouth of Connar's wife. Part of the original poem, which contains a curious deſcription of the manners of the Fingalian heroes, with a tranſlation, in which ſimplicity is more attended to than grace, is inſerted in the Appendix, NO. 20. To each of thoſe poems Kennedy has prefixed a prefatory diſſertation, containing ſome ac-

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count of the *Sgealachd*, ſtory, or argument, of the poem which is to follow. Thoſe ſgealachds, it was very common for the reciter, or *history man*, (as they were ſometimes termed in the Highlands), to give to his hearers, before he began to repeat the poems to which they related. From them Dr Smith has candidly confeſſed that he has been ſometimes obliged to fill up gaps which the want of memory in the reciter had occaſioned in the poems; but he has very properly diſtinguiſhed them, when they occur, which is not often, from the poem itſelf. If Mr Macpherſon availed himſelf of ſuch aſſiſtance, he has not thought proper to avow it.

It is worthy of notice, that ſeveral of the poems contained in this collection of Kennedy's, correſpond pretty nearly with the ancient MS. above mentioned, which belonged to the dean of Liſmore, as well as with others communicated to the Committee. For a compariſon of thoſe in detail, *vide* Appendix, NO. 19.

In Kennedy's originals, there is to be found a certain coincidence, but not always a cloſe one, with thoſe publiſhed and tranſlated by Dr Smith. Paſſages frequently occur in Kennedy, not in the poem under the ſame title with that in which they are given by Dr Smith *; and in Kennedy there is a much greater

* See the remarkable paſſage, herein after quoted, from Kennedy's *Conſtis*, of which the parallel is in Dr Smith's *Manor*.

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greater irregularity in the compoſition, ſome verſes being very beautiful, both in idea and in language, while others are rude and coarſe in both. Generally Dr Smith's edition of the ſame poem is much preferable to Kennedy's; but there are paſſages in which the reverſe is the caſe. To a perſon well acquainted with the Gaelic, it is impoſſible for any tranſlation to convey the beautiful ſimplicity of the following ſtanzas in Kennedy's *Diarmad*, which the Committee is therefore tempted to give here in the original, for the amuſement, as well as the examination of the Gaelic ſcholar; ſubjoining at the ſame time a verſion, of which the chief merit is its faithfulneſs, a quality which muſt however injure both its ſmoothneſs and its dignity.

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* Bu ghuirme do ſhuil no'n dearc,
Air uileann nan leacann ard,
'Sbu chiuine iomairt do roſg,
Na ſeimh oſnach air feur fàire,

Mar dhriſinne greine t ſhalt,
Am-lubach, cas-lubach, ar-bhuidh;
Tha do chneas co geal 'ſan cobhar,
A laoich, nach d' ſhoghain na blair dhuit!

'Sdubhach mi gun iolach ſholais,
Ach tuirſe bhroin a' ſior eughach,
A chruit chiuil is binne mire,
Cha duiſg mo chroidhe gu heibhneas.

Thuit

Thuit m'aigneadh 'ſan aigeal ſtuadhach,
Gun chlos no ſuainneas a' garraich ;
A ſior chuimhneacha' do noſan,
Och ! mo threadhaid bhroin gun abhachd.

Cha chluinn mi tuille do chombra',
Bu bhinne na ceol na filidh ;
No'n ſmeorach 'ſna gleannaibh faſaich
'Sdubh a dh' fhag gu brath mo chroidhe.

Ni 'ſmo cha'n fhaicear do ghnuis,
A dhealradh gu hur ann tur Chonail ;
Ochoin ! mi fui' thuilteach gabhaidh,
Cuin a thig a ghraidh, ort ſolus ?

'S dorcha do bhuthainn fui'n fhoid,
'S cumhann, reot, do leaba lom ;
Cho dearl' a mhadainn, gu la bhrath,
A dhuiſgeas mo ghradh, ann Sonn.'

Tranſlation.

' Bluer was thine eye than the berry
Upon the ſide of the high ſloping fields,
And calmer the movement of thine eyelids
Than the ſoft breeze on the graſs of the height.

Like the beams of the ſun thy hair,
Waving in auburn ringlets ;
Thy breaſt as white as the foam.
O hero ! would that thou hadſt died in the fields of battle !

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Mournful am I without the ſound of joy,
But the heavy note of grief conſtantly ſounding;
The muſical cruit * of the ſweeteſt ſtrain
Will not awake my heart to joy.

My mind is ſunk into the depth of waves,
Hollow murmuring, without repoſe or quiet;
While I bear conſtantly in mind thy manners.
Oh! my arrow-wound of grief without cure!

No more ſhall I hear thy converſation,
Sweeter than the muſic of bards,
Or the thruſh in the lonely vales;
Which has left my heart for ever ſad.

No more ſhall thy countenance be ſeen
To brighten in the tower of Connal.
Alas! I am ſallen under a flood of ſorrow:
When, my love! ſhall light beam on thee?

Dark is thy dwelling under the ſod,
Narrow and frozen is thy bare bed;
Never will the morning ſhine
That ſhall wake my love from his ſlumber!'

In the ſame poem of Diarmad, as given by Kennedy, is a paſſage mentioned in a note annexed to Dr Smith's tranſlation of that poem, in the following.

* For an account of the Cruit, ſee Appendix, p. 268.

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ing words: 'The following lines, although defective, being only one of the editions from which this paſſage is made, are ſo beautiful as to deſerve their room.

'Bha do neart mar thuilteach uiſge
Dol aſios a chlaoidh do namh;
Ann cabhaig mar iolair nan ſpeur
No ſteud eiſg a ruith air ſail.
A thriath threun a b'aille leadan
Na aon fhleaſgach tha 'ſan fhein,
Gu ma ſamhach a raibh tòrchul
Fui chudrom na fòide re.'

Tranſlation.

'Your ſtrength was like the ſudden burſting of water,
When going to encounter your enemy;
In ſpeed like the eagle of the ſky,
Or the darting of a fiſh through the ſea,
O valiant chief of the flowing hair!
More beautiful than any youth of the Fingalians!
Peaceful be your golden locks
Under the weight of the ſmooth ſod!'

But the paſſage taken from other editions, which Dr Smith prefers, is as follows:

'Bha do neart mar thuilteach uiſge
Dol aſios a chlaoi' do nàmh;
An cabhaig mar iolair nan ſpeur,

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'S i leum ar eilid an fhaſaich.
San àraich b'ionan do cheum
Is eaſach a leum thar charraige,
Tra ſgaoileas e cheo glas
Air gaothaibh, 'ſe bras ro Mhora.
Tha crainn is tuilm na glhacaibh
Gus am fairtlich a mhuir mhor air.
Cha ghluais e'n ſin an dulleag,
Mur cuidich leis neart nan ioma-ghaoth.
—Air ioma-ghaoith gabhſa do thuras,
A mhic o Duibhne, gu cuideachd nan Treun'ar.
'S a thriath threun a b'ailli' leadan
Na aon fhleaſgach tha ſan Fheinn',
Gu ma ſamhach a robh tòrchul,
Fo chudrom na foide re!'

Of which his tranſlation is as follows:

'Thy ſtrength was like the ſtrength of ſtreams in their foam; thy ſpeed like the eagle of Atha, darting on the dun trembling fawn of the deſart. In battle thy path was like the rapid fall of a mountain ſtream, when it pours its white torrent over the rock, and ſends abroad its grey miſts upon the wings of the winds. The roar of its ſtream is loud through Mora's rocks. Mountain trees, with all their moſs and earth, are ſwept along between its arms: but when it reaches the calm ſea of the vale, its ſtrength is loſt, and the noiſe of its courſe is ſilent. It moves not the withered leaf, if the eddying wind doth not aid it. On eddying winds let thy ſpirit be borne, ſon of Duino, to thy fathers; but light let the turf lie over thy beauteous form, and calm in the grave be thy ſlumber.'

Another

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Another coincidence, which it is particularly important to remark, is that between ſome of *Kennedy's* poems and thoſe publiſhed by *Miss Brooke*, which has been noticed in a former part of this Report, but which the Committee are induced to ſtate more particularly in this place, not only becauſe it tends to throw light on the nature and origin of the ancient poetry which was (if the expreſſion may be allowed) held claſſical both in Scotland and Ireland, but becauſe it will afford the Committee an opportunity of laying before the Society and the public a ſpecimen of ſuch ancient poetry, in what they think will be allowed an unqueſtionable ſhape, which, in their opinion, equals in excellence any poem of the kind produced either by Macpherſon or any other publiſher; and which indeed, with every guard againſt national partiality, the Committee cannot but conſider as ſeldom ſurpaſſed by the poetry of any æra, or of any country. This ſpecimen is taken from the poem of *Conloch*.

This poem is found both in Miſs Brooke's and Kennedy's collection. There are ſeveral parts common to both thoſe copies, and the ſtory is the ſame in both; but Miſs Brooke's, as ſhe herſelf informs us, is made up of two diſtinct and ſeparate pieces, and ſhe is uncertain to what time or æra ſhe ſhould refer its compoſition. In Kennedy's, the parts which it has in common with Miſs Brooke's edition are not ſo correct as in hers; but thoſe which belong excluſively to Kennedy's, appear, from the intrinſic evidence of their ſtyle and diction, to be

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of a much more genuine, as well as a more elevated ſort.

A detailed account of the two editions of Miſs Brooke and Kennedy will be found in the Appendix, NO. 21. From that part of Kennedy's, which the Committee, from the circumſtances here and in the Appendix mentioned, has no doubt is genuine ancient poetry, it will ſubjoin a pretty long extract, ſubmitting the original to the critical examination of perſons converſant in the Gaelic, for their detection of any circumſtances, if any ſuch exiſts, which can tend to throw a doubt on its authenticity; and giving a literal tranſlation, for the amuſement, and for the opinion, as far as any opinion can be founded on a tranſlation, of the Engliſh reader.

The ſtory of Conloch reſembles that of Carthon in Macpherſon. A young hero lands on the coaſt of Ireland, near the reſidence of Conal, the king of Tonna Gorma, who ſends fifteen of his warriors, led by *Beldearg*, to invite him to the feaſt. The addreſs of their leader is as follows:

'Labhair Beuldearg bu bhinn cõra,
"Chuir Conal cròdha ſinn gu d'fheachain,
Fhir is maille roſg, is ail' thu
Na mhadain ár earr ant ſhleibhe!
—Co thu fein, no cia do dhùthaich,
No cia tùr an d' fhuair thu t'àrach,
Cid e ghluais thu gu ruigheachd Eirean
Thar na cuantaibh beucach càirgheal?
Sud dhiarr Conal oirne fheoraich,
Is tu dhol cõla ruinn go àros,

A

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A chaitheamh na fleadh le uaiſlibh
Is a dhèiſteachd dhuana blàbhinn.'

'Beldearg ſpoke with ſweeteſt voice—
"Hero of the gentleſt eye, who art fairer
Than the morning on the ſkirt of the mountain!
The valiant Conal has ſent us to viſit thee,
—Who thou art, and what thy country,
Or in what tower thou haſt been reared,
And what moved thee to come to Erin,
Over the roaring ſeas of whitening billows?
This Conal deſired us to requeſt,
And that thou wouldſt go along with us to his dwelling,
To partake of the feaſt of the chiefs,
And liſten to the ſoothing ſoftneſs of ſongs.'

Conloch, who was reſtrained by a promiſe made to his mother from telling his name or country to any but to him by whom he ſhould be vanquiſhed in combat, declines the invitation, and refuſes any anſwer to Conal's inquiries. Beldearg and his fifteen companions in arms fight with the young hero, and are ſucceſſively overcome. Conal himſelf, informed of their overthrow, goes to meet this ſtranger hero. His addreſs to Conloch, and its conſequences, are thus related in the original.

'Fhir mhòir a thainig ar lear oirn!
Las teas am chridhe le gràdh dhuit.
Tha d' fhollt mar òr gatha greine
Loinnrea ar na ſleibhte là ruinn.
Tha do chruth mar ghagan ghleanntan
In teas ſamhrai fu bhàrr àille
Caoin do mhàla, ciuin do roſgan

Mar fhann ofna gaoith ar fàire.
Mar chrann fu bhlàdh tha do ghruaidhean ;
Fada buan do fhlios a churaidh !
Do fhùil mar dheallt ar magh fleibhe,
Is deirge do bheul na na fubhan.
Do dheud mar ùr fhneachd ar gheugaibh,
Mar aiteal d 'an ghrèin ar magh thu ;
Ogain chaoinghil nan dual àrbhuidh.
'S mor a fhàs thu, 'f math am boile.
So dhuit anis brigh mo fgeilfe,
A threin is math gniomh is gabhail !
Cid e ghluais thu o d' theach cõnaidh ?
Ma 'f ann do m' chòghna, 'f mor m'aighear.
Thainig mife in riochd teachdair
A fhiofracha dhiot co do dhaoine ;
Co thu fein no co do chairdean,
No cia ant àit' an d' fhuair thu t'fhaoghlam ?
" Sin an nith nach feudam innfe
Ach do neach bheir dhiom ar èigin.
Nan innfin e neach ar thalamh * * fa chala
Do fhear do ghabhail chan eurain."
" So righ Ullan 'f Thonnagorma,
Is aon la·och borbaidh na h Eirean.
Na ceil do fgeul ormfa, mhilidh,
Ge mor do ghniomh ann an teugbhoil !"
" Mo fgeula chan fheudar innfe
A Chonail na mile cath !
Co mi fein o thaim fu gheafaibh
Gus am beir treis dhiom e dhaindeoin."
Thugfad na fuinn cèad car calma
Taobh na fairg' ar cladach mingheal,
Chluinnt' an fraonaich thar na cnoeaibh
Is faram an cos bu mhileant.
Leagtha Conal leis an treunlaoch
Chuir gun chreuchd fu chuibhreach chàich e,
Rinne fud leis ge bu chruaidh e,
Ar fgàth chuain ruaidh is na tràgha.'

* Mighty

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'Mighty man who haſt come to us over ſea!
The warmth of affection has kindled for thee in my heart.
Thy hair is like the golden beam of the ſun,
Which ſparkles on yonder mountain.
Thy form is like the hanging branch of the vale,
Which the warmth of ſummer has covered with beauty.
Soft is thy brow, mildly move thine eyelids,
As the gentle breeze on the edge of the hill.
Like the bloſſom of trees are thy cheeks;
Long and full, O champion! is thy cheſt.
Thine eye is like dew on the plain of the mountain;
Redder are thy lips than the ſtrawberry.
Thy teeth are like ſnow which has newly fallen upon branches.
Thou ſeemeſt like the ſun when he opens on the ſhadowy plain.
Fair and gentle youth of the auburn ringlets!
Great haſt thou become, and goodly is thy proweſs.
Do thou now attend to the purport of my addreſs,
O hero, who excelleſt in deeds and conduct!
What has moved thee from the place of thy reſidence?
If it was to give me thine aid, great is my joy.
I have come in quality of meſſenger
To inquire of thee who thy people are;
Who thou art thyſelf, or who thy friends;
And in what place thou haſt been trained?"

"That is what I cannot reveal,
But to one who ſhall wreſt it from me by force.
If I could declare it to any one upon earth,
From a perſon of thy bearing I would not withhold it."

"Here ſtands the king of Ullin and Tonnagorma,
Who is the fierceſt among the heroes of Erin.
Conceal not thy ſtory from me, O warrior,
Though great be thy might in the ſtrife of death!"

"My ſtory cannot be revealed,
O Conal of the thouſand battles!
For I am under engagement not to declare myſelf,
Until ſuperior ſtrength do force me."

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The heroes gave a hundred turns of ſtrength,
By the border of the ſea, on the ſmooth white beach.
The blaſt of their noſtrils was heard acroſs the hillocks,
And the noiſe of their feet in the ſtruggle.
Conal was thrown down by the mighty,
Who bound him, without a wound like the reſt.
Arduous was the deed he atchieved
On the ſhore of the dark-coloured ocean.'

Conal ſends for Cuchullin to oppoſe the victorious ſtranger, whoſe progreſs to the combat is deſcribed with the ſame ſublime and terrible imagery which is given in Macpherſon's tranſlation of *the Death of Cuchullin.* *

'Ruidh e ſiar le tartar uamhan,
'S fuaimneach arm mar Spiorad Lodda,
Sgaoile gioraig is crith chatha
Fea an rathaid gu grad chòrrag.

Mar

* The ſame paſſage is found almoſt verbatim in Smith's *Manos.* 'This paſſage,' ſays Dr Smith, in a note on that poem, (Scan Dana, p. 262.) 'is much admired in the original, and is therefore inſerted for the ſake of ſuch as may underſtand it.' Such ſtriking paſſages, which, from the impreſſion they make, are in the mouth of every reciter, are often thus transferred from one poem to another, when they are applicable to the ſtory or ſituation. The ſituation of Fingal in the poem of Manos is certainly better ſuited to this poetical deſcription of the terrors of his march, than that of Cuchullin in this poem of Conloch. The ſubject of this paſſage is remarkable, as the *Spirit of Loda* has been a cauſe of diſpute among the inquirers into the authenticity of the poems of Oſſian.

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Mar mhile tonn a beucaich.
Is ſtoirm eitidh re ſlios carraige,
B' aimhail ſuaim arm 'ſ a lùirich
'S ar a ghnuis bha dùlachd catha.
Bha claidheamh liobhaidh a dealra
Togt' anàird in laimh a churaidh
Is na gaotha ſrannor ag gluaſad
A chiabh ar ſnua ſrotha buirne.
Na cnuic ar gach taobh dhe chrithich,
Chliſg ant ſhligh fu a choſan,
Las a ſhuilean, dhat a chridhe,
B'anfhèidh a chith is a cheltas.'

'He ruſhed weſt with terror in his tread,
In the ſound of his arms, like the Spirit of Loda,
When he ſcatters diſmay and panic fear
In the path of ſudden conflict.
As a thouſand waves, which roar,
In the wrath of the ſtorm, againſt a rock,
Such was the ſound of his arms and maſl,
While the gloom of battle ſpread over his countenance.
His poliſhed ſword gleamed uplifted
In the hand of the champion
While the ruſtling winds toſſed his locks
Like the foam of a rapid ſtream.
The little hills quaked around him,
The path ſhook under his ſteps;
His eyes flamed, his heart ſwelled;
Awful was the ſtorm of his face.' *

He

* 'He ruſhed, in the ſound of his arms, like the terrible ſpirit of Loda, when he comes in the roar of a thouſand ſtorms, and ſcatters battles from his eyes. He ſits on a cloud over Lochlin's ſeas.

He lays thoſe terrors aſide, however, in the preſence of the young hero, whom he addreſſes in the following mild and affectionate terms:

'Bheannaich Cuchullan do'n mhacaimh
Chliuaich e ghaiſge is àille
In glòir bhinn mar chòra fili,
Is theaſaich a chridhe le gràdh dha.
"Oganaich a thainig in cèin!
Math do ghniomh, a threun laoich chalma!
Tra chuir thu na ſeachd fir dhèg ud
Fu chuibhreach gun chreuchd le armaibh.
Tha do chrnth ſan tràigh a ſoillſe
Mar ghealaich re oiche ſhàimhe
Ag teachd roi na neula bailbhe.
Se m'adhbharſa theachd incèin
D' fhioſracha dhiot fein do chònai.
Co thu fein agus co t' athair
Na ceil ni 'ſ faide oirne."

'Cuchulin greeting hailed the ſon of youth.
He praiſed his gracefulneſs and valour,
In words ſoft as the language of bards,
While his heart was glowing with affection for him.
"Youth who haſt come from afar!
Good were thy deeds, ſtrong and mighty hero!
When thou laidſt thoſe ſeventeen warriors
Under binding, without the wound of a weapon.

Bright

ſeas. His mighty hand is on his ſword. Winds lift his flaming locks! The waining moon half lights his dreadful face. His features, blended in darkneſs, ariſe to view. So terrible was Cuthullin in the day of his fame.' *Oſs. Poems*, vol. 1. p. 385-6.

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Bright is thy form on the beach,
As the moon in the night of calm,
When ſhe comes forth from peaceful clouds.
The reaſon why I come hither
Is to inquire thy dwelling of thee.
Who thou art thyſelf, and who is thy father,
Do no longer conceal from us."

This friendly greeting Conloch meets with the ſame obſtinate refuſal as before: in conſequence of that refuſal the heroes engage.

' Chaidh iad ann dàil a cheile
Nan tre'ain bu docair ag cõrag
Gach gaoth a neartach' an ſaoithreach
Buillean baobhaidh, bèacach, dòbhaidh.
Gu cuidreach, cudromach, beumnach
Bha na trein mar thuinn ſa bhàirich,
Gan ruaga le ſtoirm ta'airt nuallain
Ar caraig chruaidh meadhon bàire.
B' amhail ſin a ghleachd na ſuinn ſo,
Chluinnte fuaim an lainn 'ſ gach àite,
Fa leth feuchain lùchleas gaiſge
Le minig a chaſgra nàmhan.
Chaidh an ſgiathan breac a bhloide,
Chaidh an claidhmhean gorma bhearna,
Chaidh an ſleaghan fada liobhaidh
A chaba 'ſan ſtri bu ghàbhaidh.
Chaidh a chõhrag nan gath-guaine
Gu neo-mèineach 'ſ gu cruai ghniomhach
Is fhuair am macan grinn a lot
Le daltan a chathamhilidh.
Thuit e, mar in giùſaich an fhàſach
Ant iuran àluin le faram
Gun fhios, thug a charaig fuaim uaith,
Chrithich agus ghluais an talamh.

"A

"A mhacain a thainig aſteach
'S ann leamſa rinne do chreuchda ;
Is gearr gus an togar do leac,
Na ceil am feaſt co thu fein oirn.
Innis domhſa nis gu lom
O na tharla dhuit am àraich
Co thu fein no cia t' ainm,
No cia an taobh as an d' thainig ?"
"Is truagh an aithne rinn thu ormſa,
Athair uaſail, uaibhrich, ghràdhaich !
Nuair thilgin ort gu fiar fann
Ant ſhleagh an comhair a hearra."*

'They attacked each other
Like waves contending reſtleſs,
When all the winds ſtrengthen their rolling force,
With roaring, toſſing, whelming blaſts. *
Bearing full againſt each other, with equal weight of ſtrokes,
The heroes were like waves on the breakers of the ſhore.
When the ſtorm purſues them with its bellowing guſt,
Daſhing on the rocks in their midway courſe.
Such was the conteſt of the champions,
While the ſound of their weapons was heard around,
As they practiſed on each ſide the rapid exerciſe of valour
Which had often ſubdued their foes.
Their ſpotted ſhields were cleft in fragments ;
Their blue ſwords were hacked in edge ;
Their long and poliſhed ſpears were turned in point,
In the wonder-raiſing ſtrife.

They

* A ſimile of this kind occurs in the poem of Carthon. 'They fought, like two contending winds, that ſtrive to roll the wave." *Oſſ. Poems*, vol. i. p. 90.

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They proceeded to fight with the *guainé* dart,
With unabated eagerneſs and hardihood,
Till the graceful youth received a wound
From the nurſeling of hard fought battles.
He fell, like a tree of flouriſhing growth,
In the wilderneſs of pines, unexpectedly.
The rock from which it ſprung reſounds to its fall:
Its bank of earth ſhakes, and burſts aſunder.
"O ſon of youth, who haſt come from a foreign land!
By me has thy wound been given.
Soon ſhall thy ſtone be exalted.
Do not conceal from us for ever who thou art.
Tell me now, without reſerve,
Since fate has met thee in my field of battle,
Who thou art, and what thy name,
And from what quarter thou haſt come."
"Alas! that thou didſt fail to know me,
My noble, high-minded, beloved father!
When my dart, with ſideway aim and feeble caſt,
Sought thee with averted barb."

The Society muſt not however judge of the force and beauty of this poem by the tranſlation here given of it. There is, in the original Gaelic, particularly in the deſcription of the combat of the heroes, by means of the ſucceſſive ſwell of epithets, the appropriate terms of ſimplicity and force by which the action is brought before the eye, and the rapid movement of the meaſure which gives it to the ear, altogether an effect produced, to which no combination of words in the Engliſh language, which the Committee could either command or procure, can at all do juſtice.

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' Chaidh iad ann dàil a chèile
Na tre'ain bu docair ag cõrag
Gach gaoth a meartach' an ſaoithreach
Buillean baobhaidh bèacach dobhaidh.
Gu cuidreach cudromach beumnach
Bha na trèin mar thuinn ſa bhairich
Gan ruaga le ſtoirm ta' airt nuallain
Ar caraig chruaidh meadhon bàire.'

The Committee ſets down theſe lines, forgetting, in the feeling produced in itſelf, to how few, how very few, of the readers of this Report, they can give any idea. But it is tempted to quote them, with the purpoſe of calling forth the teſtimony of thoſe few by whom they will be underſtood, that the Committee, in its account of the original of this poem, does not deceive, or at leaſt has no intention to deceive, the Society or the public.

In Kennedy's collection, as well as in thoſe furniſhed the Committee by others, are ſeveral paſſages nearly, and ſometimes altogether the ſame, with Macpherſon's tranſlation; but neither in Kennedy's collection, nor in thoſe of the others, does the poem in which they occur always correſpond in its title, ſtory, or general tenor, with that in which the reſembling paſſages are given by Macpherſon. Of theſe, as far as they are found in the poem of Fingal, Dr D. Smith has, at the deſire of the Society, formed a ſelection, which will be found in the Appendix, NO. 15. To this paper the Committee requeſts the particular attention of the Society. The Doctor has, by the Committee's direction, taken the ſame

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ſame liberty which Mr Macpherſon may be ſuppoſed to have uſed, namely, that of collecting paſſages, and ſometimes even lines, from different poems, and different editions of the ſame poem, the '*disjecta membra poetæ*,' which ſeemed to relate to, or to be connected with, the principal event in the main poem, as found in Macpherſon's publication. The Committee has been at pains to have the tranſlation as ſcrupulouſly literal as the nature of the two languages would admit. Perhaps indeed, in ſome paſſages it may incur the cenſure of obſcurity and abruptneſs, by a too cloſe adherence to the expreſſion of the original. By comparing this tranſlation with Macpherſon's, in ſome of the longer and moſt cloſely correſponding paſſages, even the mere Engliſh reader will be able, in ſome degree, to form a judgment of what alterations that gentleman may have made in the collection he gave to the world, either by omitting, ſupplying or refining his original; with this ſaving always, however, which the Committee muſt requeſt the Society to keep in mind, that it is impoſſible to know what copies or editions of the poems in queſtion Mr Macpherſon might have procured, or have had acceſs to.

This collection of Kennedy's, as the Committee humbly conceives, appears in a ſhape that hardly admits of any ſuſpicion of forgery or fabrication. It ſeems material not only in itſelf, but as tending to confirm (if ſuch confirmation were neceſſary) the authenticity of the collection made by the Reverend Dr Smith, which the Doctor always mentioned to have

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have been in a great part received from Kennedy. The diſcrepancies which are found between the two collections, and the circumſtance of parallel paſſages ſometimes occurring in poems bearing a different title in Smith's to that aſſigned them by Kennedy, ſeem to the Committee to afford an argument rather for than againſt their authenticity, eſpecially when the manner of obtaining thoſe poems, from the recitation of different perſons, is conſidered.

One of the poems collected by Kennedy, entitled *Carril*, the Committee has never ſeen any where elſe. Though with a ſimplicity bordering on rudeneſs, it is extremely ſtriking in the Gaelic, but very difficult to be tranſlated. It is given entire in the Appendix, NO. 22. in Kennedy's own orthography, and with it the preamble or argument with which he accompanied the copy he ſent to the Committee, alſo literally given. From the firſt the Gaelic ſcholar may form an opinion of the collection; from the ſecond the Engliſh reader may eſtimate the literary abilities of the collector.

The Committee cannot in this place avoid remarking, as a circumſtance that ſtruck it forcibly, and it is perſuaded muſt ſtrike every impartial inquirer into this ſubject, that the collections of the ancient (or ſuppoſed ancient) poetry of the Highlands, by whomſoever made (or ſuppoſed to be made), preſent to the reader pieces of ſuch uncommon poetical merit. Not only Mr Macpherſon, whoſe talents and early turn for poetry are acknowledged, and Dr Smith of Campbeltown, whoſe learning and literary accompliſhments

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pliſhments are very conſiderable, but other men, ſuch as *Clark* and *Kennedy*, whoſe ſtudies and habits of life were remote from the cultivation of poetry, who have either never written on any other occaſion, or whoſe writings give no token of poetical genius or of powers of compoſition, produce to the world poetry which, in ſublimity and tenderneſs, will, it is believed, be admitted to be at leaſt equal to the compoſitions of the beſt modern poets, and but little inferior to the moſt admired among the ancient. Setting aſide all the credit due to perſons of unimpeached and reſpectable characters, may it not be aſked, how impoſture and forgery ſhould become *muſes* to ſuch men, ſhould inſpire them with the fervour, the pathos, and the imagery contained in the compoſitions which they have thus given to the world?

In addition to the evidence ariſing from the MSS. or recited poems collected by others, the Committee thinks it may afford ſome ſatisfaction to the Society, to lay before it, what they conceive to be,

EVIDENCE, ariſing from a particular examination of the original (as it is termed), left by Macpherſon himſelf, compared with his tranſlation, formerly publiſhed in the 'Specimen of the intended Tranſlation of Oſſian's Poems,' which the Committee has men-

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tioned its having received from Mr John Mackenzie, Mr Macpherſon's executor, containing the engagement of Fingal with the Spirit of Loda, in the poem entitled *Carrickthura*. The entire ſpecimen will be found in the Appendix, NO. 12. p. 162.

The Committee ſubjoins the paſſages in the original Gaelic, which it has analized, with a rigidly literal tranſlation into Engliſh, and annexes the tranſlation given by Macpherſon. From ſuch analyſis and compariſon the Committee cannot help giving its opinion, which it thus puts in the Society's power to reject or to confirm, that, in the original, the ſcene and its circumſtances are given diſtinctly; they are embodied in clear and accurate deſcription; that in the tranſlation by Mr Macpherſon they are frequently loſt in words, of which the ſound pleaſes the ear, but which are of a general, indeterminate ſort, that might belong to any other place or object of a ſimilar kind.

Original.

'Dh 'eirch Innisthore gu mall
Is Carraigthura iuil nan ſtuadh.'

Literal

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Literal Tranſlation.

'Inniſtore roſe ſlowly,
And Carrickthura, *chief of waves* *.

Macpherſon's Tranſlation.

'Inniſtore roſe to fight, and Carrickthura's moſſy towers.'

In the original there is no *riſing to ſight*, no *moſſy towers*; but the picture, vivid to the imagination, is ſimple in the expreſſion: 'Inniſtore roſe *ſlowly*,' with that ſlowneſs with which a diſtant object riſes to the ſight—and 'Carrickthura, chief of waves;' expreſſing the ſituation of the place in a commanding point of view, above the ſea.

'Bha comhara beud gu h-ard
Teine dall 's a thaobh ſan ſmùid.'

'The ſignal of evil (or violence) was on high,
A blind fire, with its ſide in ſmoke.'

'But the ſign of diſtreſs was on their top; the warning flame edged with ſmoke.'

* *i. e.* Riſing majeſtically above the ſea. *Iuil*, in the Weſt Highlands, is uſed to expreſs a land-mark.

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Having put in *mossy towers* in the preceding line, he gives *their* tops in this, though the expreſſion in the original is ſimply *gu hard*, on high. 'Warning flame' is a metaphyſical idea, putting in a reflex attribute of the fire, which was intended to warn his friends of the diſtreſs of their chief; but, in the original, the epithet *dall*, *blind*, is a well known Gaelic epithet for ſmothered flame, which exactly expreſſes what every one has ſeen in kindling ſtraw or other materials for fire ſignals.

'Bhuail an righ a chliabh air ball;
Gun dàil bha 'gharbh ſhleagh o 'chul
Chunnaic e gun chleth a ghaoth;
Bha leadan air a chul a ſtri;
Cha robh sàmhchair an righ faoin. *

'The king ſtruck his breaſt at the ſight (inſtantly),
Without delay his rough ſpear was from his back:
He ſaw the wind without ſtrength.
His hair (locks) was on his back ſtruggling.
The ſilence of the king was not vain.' (without meaning.)

'The king of Morven ſtruck his breaſt; he aſſumed at once the ſpear. His darkened brow bends forward to the coaſt; he looks back to the lagging winds. His hair is diſordered on his back. The ſilence of the king is terrible.'

It

* *Faoin*, a word of which it is ſcarcely poſſible to give an adequate tranſlation.

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It is needleſs to enter into any particular illuſtration, to ſhew how ſimple and natural this picture of Fingal is in the original; how much altered from that ſimplicity in Macpherſon's tranſlation. In the original the picture prompts the words; in Macpherſon's tranſlation, the expreſſion is thought of, without attending to the picture. Macpherſon wiſhes to give an explanation or commentary to his reader; he will not truſt to his underſtanding or feeling the meaning and force of the ſimple expreſſion in the original, 'He ſaw the winds without force,' but tells, by an interpolation, what that expreſſion imports. '*His darkened brow bends forward to the coaſt; he looks back to the lagging wind.*' He makes his ſilence *terrible*, when there was no one to ſee or feel terror from it. The original, *faain*, which it is difficult to find an exact Engliſh word for, means ſomething light, vain, that has no conſequence or meaning.

'Thuit oidhch' air Rotha nan ſtuadh;
Ghabh cala nan cruach an long;
Bha carraig mu iomall a' chuain
Dh' aom coille thar fuaim nan tonn.'

'Night fell on Rotha of the waves;
The harbour of little hills received the ſhip.
There was a rock on the edge of the ſea;
The wood bending over the ſound of the waves.'

'Night came down on the ſea; Rotha's bay received the ſhip. A rock bends along the coaſt, with all its echoing wood.'

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This is certainly a very good, and, when the original is poetry, may be conſidered a cloſe tranſlation; but it wants the ſimple deſcription, the actual picture of the original.

'Air mullach bha crom chruth Loduinn
Is clacha mor nan iomadh buadh.'

'On a top (or ſmall height) was the circle of the form (or [image) of Loda,
And the large ſtones of many virtues.'

"On the top is the circle of Loda, the moſſy ſtone of power.'

Here is the ſame departure from the ſimple deſcription of the original, 'the large ſtones of many virtues.' Beſides there being in the Gaelic no epithet *moſſy*, the ſingular *ſtone* was contradictory to the deſcription, in the preceding line, of a circle, which could only be compoſed of many ſtones.

'Air ìoſal bha raon gun mhòrchùis
Agus feur is craobh ri cuan;
Craobh a bhuain a 'ghaoth 'ſ i ard
O iomall nan carn gu raon.'

'Upon the low (ground) was a plain, without greatneſs (extent);
And graſs and a tree near the ocean;
A tree which the wind had torn, and it (the wind) high,
From the edge of the ſtones to the plain.'

'A narrow plain ſpreads beneath, and aged trees, which the midnight winds in their wrath had torn from the ſhaggy rock.'

The

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The epithets in the tranſlation, of *aged*, *midnight*, and *ſhaggy*, are not in the original, and inſtead of the figurative expreſſion of the winds *in their wrath*, the original, according to the ſimple language uſual in Gaelic, is the wind, *and it high*, that is, the wind when it is high.

' Bha gorm-ſhiubhal nan ſrutha thall
Is oſag mhal o chuan bha faoin.' †

' The blue moving (courſe) of the ſtreams was oppoſite,
And a ſlow breeze from the ſea, which was idle (quiet or at reſt).'

' The blue courſe of a ſtream was there: the lonely blaſt of ocean purſues the thiſtle's beard.'

This picture of the wind *purſuing the thiſtle's beard* ſeems a favourite one with the tranſlator, as it is found in many paſſages of his work; but it is here altogether unwarranted by the original, which however is much more beautiful in its deſcription of the gentle breeze from a calm or quiet ſea. The ſoft ſlow of the Gaelic lines is ſtrikingly accordant with the ſcene they deſcribe.

† The ſame untranſlatable word as before.

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'Dh' eirich gath o dharaig liath;
Bha fleagh nan triath air an fhraoch.'

'The flame roſe from the grey oak,
The feaſt of heroes was on the heath.'

'The flame of three oaks aroſe; the feaſt is ſpread around.'

The epithet of *grey*, applied to the oak, is much more natural and pictureſque than the number *three* adopted by Macpherſon, without any authority from the original; and the circumſtance of the feaſt being ſpread *on the heath* denotes the ſimplicity of the meal, which Macpherſon, thinking it probably too mean to have only the ground for a table, has changed into the general term *around*. 'The feaſt is ſpread around.'

In the ſame manner may be traced through the whole poem the ſimple deſcription of the original, the figurative and ornamented expreſſion of the tranſlation. The concluſion which an impartial reader will draw from the compariſon, the Committee thinks muſt be favourable to the authenticity of the original; or at leaſt that he will form a decided opinion, that, on the ſuppoſition of both being fabricated, the Engliſh muſt have been fabricated the laſt, which is a circumſtance of very conſiderable weight in the preſent inquiry.

Were the Committee inclined to indulge themſelves in tracing ſimilitudes, (an exerciſe of the imagination, which, from the time of *Fluellen* downwards, generally affords conviction only to the diſcoverer,

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coverer, but is matter rather of amuſement or ridicule to other perſons), it might quote many paſſages from Macpherſon's tranſlation of Homer, where he has, in a ſomewhat ſimilar manner, arrayed the ſublime and ſimple expreſſion of the Greek in the fuſtian and flowery garb of a very faulty verſion. The Committee does not mean to compare the merits of his tranſlation of the Grecian with thoſe of his tranſlation of the Celtic bard; it only alludes to a ſimilar departure from ſimplicity in both.

This ſpecimen of the original of Oſſian, and ſtill more, the entire original itſelf, of which the publication is very ſoon expected, will afford an opportunity to thoſe who queſtion its authenticity, to examine narrowly the intrinſic evidence ariſing from the nature and conſtruction of the language. This will be of the firſt importance in the diſpute. The Committee does not recollect any inſtance of a fabrication in a foreign language, or in a language ſuppoſed to be that of an ancient period, where, upon an accurate examination, internal proofs of the forgery have not been diſcovered in the very language alone in which the forgery was attempted to be conveyed.

The Committee is naturally led to obſerve in this place the diſcoveries which ſome critics imagine they have made of modern and fabricated expreſſions and terms occurring in the Oſſian of Macpherſon. The inſtances of this ſort which the Committee has looked into, do not ſupport the concluſion drawn from them; being all expreſſions, whether of a date more the

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or leſs remote, certainly much more ancient than the birth of Macpherſon, as may be ſeen by reference to books, dictionaries and vocabularies, publiſhed long prior to that time. Moſt of them indeed are indiſputably of great antiquity; from what root derived, or from what language, if any, they are borrowed, it is not the buſineſs of the Committee to inquire; the Gaelic has all the appearance of being a very ancient and original language, and its primitive, the Celtic, probably lent more to, than it borrowed from, the principal languages of Europe.

A ſimilar obſervation applies to the doubts and difficulties which have occurred as to expreſſions in thoſe poems applicable to the period of their compoſition, or to that on which their narrative is founded. Many of thoſe difficulties, whatever be their force, do not impeach Macpherſon, nor are they to be reſolved by a ſuppoſition of fabrication or forgery in *him*; for thoſe circumſtances, whether true or falſe, were current in traditionary belief long before the time of Macpherſon's publication. The dignity of *Fingal*, and the extenſive nature of his authority and command, his battles with the invaders from the north, and with the Roman legions, the kings of the world *, are particularly mentioned in Iriſh poems and by Iriſh authors, who are not at all

* See this expreſſion in the Carril of Kennedy, (App. No. 22.)

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all friendly to the pretenſions of Macpherſon, nor to the authenticity of the poems, *as given by him.*

The friends of Macpherſon, and ſupporters of the authenticity of his tranſlation, complain that they have ſuffered more from the ignorance than from the knowledge of their opponents, moſt of whom had no acquaintance with the language in which the original poems were written. They aſſert, that no modern could poſſibly write ſuch Gaelic as the original given by Macpherſon in his Temora, and that to be given in the publication, of which the aforegoing ſpecimen is already printed, any more than the beſt Greek or Latin ſcholars could write what would paſs itſelf, on perſons converſant in thoſe languages, for the compoſition of Homer or Virgil. This the Committee muſt ſubmit to perſons who are ſufficiently ſkilled in the ancient and written Gaelic to enable them to decide on the ſubject; and in order to give to ſuch perſons an opportunity of forming an opinion in this matter, they have ſubjoined in the Appendix, as already mentioned, the entire ſpecimen of the intended publication of Fingal, with the literal Latin tranſlation given by the learned and ingenious Mr M'Farlane, employed for that purpoſe by Mr Macpherſon's executors.

The meaſure, and what has been ſometimes called the rhyme of theſe Gaelic poems, are circumſtances frequently brought into diſcuſſion, in the queſtion regarding their genuineneſs and antiquity. There is a conſiderable, though not an abſolute uniformity in thoſe

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thoſe reſpects, in the originals given by Macpherſon, and thoſe collected by other perſons, and by the Committee.

The meaſure of the narrative part of the poems is generally that in which the original in the ſpecimen of *Carrickthura*, above alluded to, is written.

' Thuit oidhch' air Rotha nan ſtuadh ;
Ghabh ṡala nan cruach an long ;
Bha carraig mu iomall a' chuain ;
Dh' aom coille thar fuaim nan tonn.
Air mullach bha crom chruth Loduinn,
Is clacha mòr nan iomadh buadh ;
Air ìoſal bha raon gun mhòrchùis,
Agus feur is craobh ri cuan ;
Craobh a bhuain a' ghaoth, 'ſ i ard,
O iomall nan carn gu raon.
Bha gorm-ſhiubhall nan ſrutha thall,
Is oſag mhall o chuan bha faoin. '

So likewiſe in Smith and Kennedy.

' Nuair chunnaic inghean Ghormla nan ſteud
An treun na luighe 'ſ an ùir
Chaill i ḥaithne — thuit ſan fheur
Mar leug, gun charuchadh ſùl.

Tra dh'airich i aṡ a pràmh
Sheinn gu cràiteach iolach bhròin
Cliu Dhiarmaid bu ghile ſnuadh
Shios gu duaichnidh air an lon.'

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And in the ancient MS. which formerly was the dean of Liſmore's, now in the poſſeſſion of the Society:

'Di wamyn beggane ſloyeg·
Ag eſs royg· ny negg·in mawlé
Di chemyn ſa holt yr lerr
Currych mor agus ben ann.

Keigyt leich yownych mane reic·
Fa mat· er gneeit· er gy· gart
Ffir yair neiſh is marg a cheith
Di yowmiſt er gi teir nert.'

There was a ſhorter and more rapid meaſure for the lyrical parts of the compoſition; ſuch was generally uſed for the *Prosnacha Catha*, the ſong of incitement to battle, which it was the office of the bards to ſing, to animate the heroes when about to engage the enemy. Such is the meaſure of ſome of the odes given by Miſs Brooke, and of the war-ſong to *Gaul*, which is in the poſſeſſion of the Society. The opening of this war-ſong, as in one of the *Kilbride* MSS. is as follows: its meaſure is quick, rapid, and ſpirit-ſtirring, each line generally containing one or two dactyls.

'Goll mear mileanta,
Ceap na crodhachta,
Lamh fhial arrachd,
Mian na mordhachta.
Leoghar luath adhbhal,
Leonadh lan biodhbhadh,
Tonn go treun thoirneadh,

Goll

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Goll an gnàth iorghail.
Fraoch nar fuar i dhaidh
Laoch go làn deabhaidh,
Rèim an righ churuidh,
Mur lèim làn teinmhidh.
Leoghar, lonn, gniomhach,
Bèodha, binn, duanach,
Crèuchdach, comhdhàlach,
Eùchdach, iola bhuadhach.'

In Engliſh as follows;

'Gaul ſtrong and brave,
Trunk of valour,
Hand of bounty and of might,
Fit example for greatneſs.
Champion ſwift and powerful
To wound a multitude of enemies.
A wave that rolls in ſtrength,
Is Gaul in the field of ſtrife;
A heath that is ready to burn,
Is the hero in the full conflict.
The courſe of the kingly warrior
Is as the full darting meteor.
Champion chearful and full of action,
Lively, eloquent, and muſical.
Though dealing wounds, ſteady in friendſhip,
Performing feats of proweſs, and gaining many victories.'

The

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The ſame meaſure will be found in the original of another war-ſong, communicated to the Committee, from memory, by its correſpondent the Reverend Mr Gallie, in his letter of 4th March 1801, taken into this Report, p. 39. That war-ſong or ode, with a literal tranſlation, is as follows:

' A mhacain cheann
Nan curſan ſtrann
Ard leumnach righ na'n ſleagh
Lamh threin 'ſguch cás
Croidhe ard gun ſcá
Ceann airm nan rinn gear goſrt
Gearr ſios gu bas
Gun bharc ſheól bán
Bhi ſnamh ma dhubh Inniſhtore
Mar tharnanech bhaoil
Do bhuill a laoich
Do ſhuil mar chaoir ad cheann
Mar charaic chruin
Do chroidhe gun roinn
Mar laſſan oidhch do lann
Cum ſuar do ſcia
Is crobbhui nial
Mar chih bho reul a bhaiſh
A mhacain cheann
Nan curſan ſtrann
Sgrios naimhde ſios gu lar.'

' Offspring of the chiefs
Of ſnorting, high-bounding ſteeds!
King of ſpears!
Strong arm in every trial;
Ambitious heart without diſmay;

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Chief of the hoſt of ſevere ſharp pointed weapons;
Cut down to death,
So that no white-ſailed bark
May float round dark Iniſtore.
Like the deſtroying thunder
Be thy ſtroke, O hero!
Thy forward eye like the flaming bolt!
As the firm rock,
Unwavering be thy heart.
As the flame of night be thy ſword.
Uplift thy ſhield,
Of the hue of blood.
As a [The words in the original are not intelligible.]
Offspring of the chiefs
Of ſnorting ſteeds,
Cut down the foes to earth!'

Beſides this meaſure of a ſhorter and more rapid kind, ſuited to certain lyric paſſages in the ancient poetry, there is ſometimes found a variation in meaſure and cadence, imputed by Gaelic ſcholars to a deſire in the poet of accommodating the rythm of his lines to the ſtate of mind or emotion of the perſon who is the ſuppoſed ſpeaker of them. Such is the paſſage in the poem of *Gaul*, already ſo particularly noticed by the Committee, where the hero is repreſented as balancing with anxious inquietude between the ſenſe of danger and the dread of ſhame. The paſſage is entitled in the original, 'Iom-cheiſt Ghuill,' the anxiety of Gaul. (Sean Dana, p. 27.)

'S am bheileam fein am aonar,
Am meaſg nan ceuda colg;
Gun lann liomhaidh leam

Sa

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Sa chath dhorcha !
—Tha imeachd nan tonn geal
Gu Morbheinn nam bad ;
An tog mi mo ſhiuil,
'S gun chaomh am fagus ?
Ach cionnus a dh'eireas an dàn,
Ma dh' fhàſas neul
Air cliu mhic Morna ?'

'And am I alone,
In the midſt of a hundred weapons,
Without one gleaming ſword to back me
In the dreadful conteſt ?—
The bearing of the white waves
Is towards Morven of groves—
Shall I raiſe my ſails,
No friend being near ?—
But how ſhall the ſong ariſe,
If a cloud overſpread
The fame of Morni's ſon ?'

The rhyme is not like that of modern poetry, a regular coincidence of ſound at the end of the lines, but ſometimes only a repetition of a ſimilar, or nearly ſimilar ſound, in ſome part of the line, on which the voice and the memory alſo may reſt.

In the elegiac *laments* which are ſometimes found in thoſe poems after the narrative is cloſed, there is a wonderful ſmoothneſs in the verſe, and the ſounds are of that ſoft and plaintive kind (chiefly made up of the dipthong *ao* and the tripthong *aoi*) which ſuit the ſubject of the lament. Of this kind is the lamentation of *Graine*, in the poem of *Dargo*, given by Dr Smith, already quoted, p. 75. Such is the

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natural choice of the poet, who pours his regrets and ſorrows in ſounds which regret and ſorrow inſpire; the more artificial adaptation of ſound to the ſenſe, which ſeeks out words for the ſake of their ſound, is perhaps oftener ſuppoſed than intended, even in the moſt cultivated poetry. Of this ſort of art in Gaelic poetry, Dr Smith of Campbelton has given a well choſen inſtance, in the poem of Dermid, (Gaelic Antiq. p. 193.) in two lines, deſcriptive of different objects, the firſt of the hard, tough ſpear of Dermid, the ſecond of the ſoft and ſlender reed of Lego.

'Chagnadh e a ſhleagan readh ruadh
Mar chuile na leige no mar luachair.'

'He (the boar) grinds the tough red ſpear,
As if it were the ſoft reed or ruſh of Lego.'

Though the Committee, as has been hinted at in the beginning of this Report, wiſhed ſedulouſly to avoid any thing like controverſy on this ſubject, deſirous rather of procuring evidence and information, than of drawing inferences from them, yet it cannot help, very ſhortly, taking notice of ſome difficulties in this inveſtigation, which have ſtruck, and muſt ſtrike, every impartial perſon at all acquainted with the ſubject, and converſant at the ſame time with the hiſtory of nations, or the progreſs of ſociety.

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The firſt of theſe is the circumſtance of the language, in poems of ſuch antiquity, being ſo nearly what it ſtill is, in the common uſe and underſtanding of the country. Perhaps the ſituation of the Highlands and Iſlands, where this poetry has been preſerved, and the little communication they had with other countries, may in ſome meaſure account for this circumſtance. Language is changed from its uſe in ſociety, as coins are ſmoothed by their currency in circulation. If the one be locked up among a rude, remote, and unconnected people, like the other when it is buried under the earth, its great features and general form will be but little altered. Certain it is, that, with the allowance of a ſomewhat different orthography, and a few words now in diſuſe, which the beſt Celtic ſcholars could not make out without the help of the context, the language of the ancient MSS. publiſhed by Miſs Brooke and others, in Ireland, and alſo that of thoſe in the poſſeſſion of the Society, is very much the ſame with that which proficients in the Gaelic now write, and is perfectly intelligible to ſuch perſons.

Another circumſtance of difficulty is, that any human memory ſhould be able to retain poems of ſuch length, and ſo numerous, as ſome of thoſe Highlanders, from whoſe oral recitation the collectors of ſuch poems obtained them, repeated. But the power of memory in perſons accuſtomed from their infancy to ſuch repetitions, and who are unable to aſſiſt or to injure it by writing, muſt not be judged of by any ideas or any experience poſſeſſed by

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thoſe who have only ſeen its exertions in ordinary life. Inſtances of ſuch miraculous powers of memory (as they may be ſtyled by us), the Committee believes are known in moſt countries where the want of writing, like the want of a ſenſe, gives an almoſt ſupernatural force to thoſe by which that privation is ſupplied. In the caſe in queſtion, the Committee itſelf includes ſeveral individuals who have liſtened with aſtoniſhment, in their younger days, to the recitation of old Highlanders, whoſe habit, whoſe profeſſion in ſome ſort it was, to repeat the traditionary tales and poems of their anceſtors; and the Reverend Dr Steuart of Luſs, with whoſe highly reſpectable character, and uncommon extent of knowledge, the Society is well acquainted, has given his teſtimony to the Committee, that when a very young man, ardent in his love of Gaelic antiquities and poetry, he had procured, in the Iſle of Sky, an old Highlander to recite to him; the man continued, for three ſucceſſive days, and during ſeveral hours in each day, to repeat, without heſitation, with the utmoſt rapidity, and, as appeared to Dr Steuart, with perfect correctneſs, many thouſand lines of ancient poetry, and would have continued his repetitions much longer, if the Doctor's leiſure and inclination had allowed him to liſten.

A third difficulty, which has always appeared to intelligent inquirers the hardeſt to be ſurmounted in this matter, is, the ſtyle of manners and of ſentiment exhibited by the poems in queſtion. Some eminent critics have endeavoured to ſhew, that there

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was, at the ſame period with that which is ſuppoſed to be the æra of Fingal, an equal, or nearly equal degree of heroic refinement among different northern nations, in other reſpects rude and uncivilized. The Committee, in all the ancient Celtic poetry which it has heard or ſeen, perceives a diſtinction made between the *Fingalian* race and their invaders or enemies; uniformly aſſuming to the former a degree of generoſity, compaſſion, and in particular of attention and delicacy towards the female ſex, which they do not allow to the latter. They, like the Greeks of old, repreſent every other people as barbarous, in compariſon with the race and people of Fingal; and this refinement, it muſt be obſerved, or a not much inferior degree of it, is to be found in the poems confeſſed by all parties to be genuine, which Macpherſon and other collectors thought unworthy of being publiſhed or tranſlated, which always exhibit a ſort of chivalrous valour in combat, and generoſity in victory, that ſeem to have particularly belonged to the Fingalian character *. Some of

* In all the poems, whether of more or leſs excellence in point of compoſition, the epithets *mild* and *generous* are applied to *Fingal* through the whole variety of terms which the language (more copious in that reſpect than could eaſily be imagined) can afford. Miſs Brooke, in her publication, has enlarged on this amiable part of Fingal's character, ſo prominent in the ancient poems which ſhe has tranſlated, the authenticity of which has never been diſputed.

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of the poems, indeed, particularly thoſe of an inferior and more corrupted claſs, ſpeak of the ſpoil to be acquired by the conquerors; but it ſeems to have been more a mark of ſuperiority, or an acknowledgment of ſubjection, than the fruit of pillage; and inhumanity to the conquered and the captive is never ſuppoſed to be a legitimate uſe of victory.

In conſidering this matter, the Committee begs leave alſo to ſuggeſt, that ſome allowance ought always to be made for the colouring of poetry, on the manners and ſentiments of the heroic perſons of whom it ſpeaks. If Oſſian, or whoever he was who compoſed the poems in queſtion, had that humanity and tenderneſs which are ſo generally the attendants on genius, he might, though he could not create manners of which there was no archetype in life, transfuſe into his poetical narrative a portion of imaginary delicacy and gentleneſs, which, while it flatters the feelings of the poet himſelf, gives at the ſame time a dignity, a grace, and an intereſt to his picture.

On

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On the whole, the Committee beg leave to

REPORT,

That there are two queſtions to which it has directed its inquiries, on the ſubject which the Society was pleaſed to refer to it, and on which it now ſubmits the beſt evidence it has been able to procure.

1ſt, What poetry, of what kind, and of what degree of excellence, exiſted anciently in the Highlands of Scotland, which was generally known by the denomination of *Oſſianic*, a term derived from the univerſal belief that its father and principal compoſer was Oſſian the ſon of Fingal?

2d, How far that collection of ſuch poetry, publiſhed by Mr James Macpherſon, is genuine?

As to the firſt of thoſe queſtions, the Committee can with confidence ſtate its opinion, that ſuch poetry did exiſt, that it was common, general, and in great abundance; that it was of a moſt impreſſive and ſtriking ſort, in a high degree eloquent, tender, and ſublime.

The ſecond queſtion it is much more difficult to anſwer deciſively. The Committee is poſſeſſed of no documents, to ſhew how much of his collection Mr

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Mr Macpherſon obtained in the form in which he has given it to the world. The poems and fragments of poems which the Committee has been able to procure, contain, as will appear from the article in the Appendix, NO. 15. already mentioned, often the ſubſtance, and ſometimes almoſt the literal expreſſion (the *ipsissima verba*), of paſſages given by Mr Macpherſon, in the poems of which he has publiſhed the tranſlations. But the Committee has not been able to obtain any one poem the ſame in title and tenor with the poems publiſhed by him. It is inclined to believe that he was in uſe to ſupply chaſms, and to give connection, by inſerting paſſages which he did not find, and to add what he conceived to be dignity and delicacy to the original compoſition, by ſtriking out paſſages, by ſoftening incidents, by refining the language, in ſhort by changing what he conſidered as too ſimple or too rude for a modern ear, and elevating what in his opinion was below the ſtandard of good poetry. To what degree, however, he exerciſed theſe liberties, it is impoſſible for the Committee to determine. The advantages he poſſeſſed, which the Committee began its inquiries too late to enjoy, of collecting from the oral recitation of a number of perſons now no more, a very great number of the ſame poems, on the ſame ſubjects, and then collating thoſe different copies or editions, if they may be ſo called, rejecting what was ſpurious or corrupted in one copy, and adopting from another ſomething more genuine and excellent in its place, afforded him

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him an opportunity of putting together what might fairly enough be called an original whole, of much more beauty, and with much fewer blemiſhes, than the Committee believes it *now* poſſible for any perſon, or combination of perſons, to obtain.

The Committee thinks it diſcovers ſome difference between the ſtyle both of the original (one book of which is given by Macpherſon) and tranſlation of *Temora*, and that of the tranſlation of Fingal, and of the ſmall portion of the original of that poem, which it received from his executors. There is more the appearance of ſimplicity and originality in the latter than in the former. Perhaps when he publiſhed Fingal, Mr Macpherſon, unknown as an author, and obſcure as a man, was more diffident, more cautious, and more attentive, than when at a ſubſequent period he publiſhed Temora, fluſhed with the applauſe of the world, and diſtinguiſhed as a man of talents, and an author of high and riſing reputation. Whoever will examine the original prefixed to ſome of the editions of the 7th book of Temora, and compare it with the tranſlation, will, in the opinion of the Committee, diſcover ſome imperfections, ſome *modernisms*, (if the expreſſion may be allowed) in the Gaelic, which do not occur in the ſpecimen of Fingal, given in the Appendix to this Report; and, in the Engliſh, more of a looſe and inflated expreſſion (which however was an error into which Macpherſon was apt to fall), than is to be found in his earlier tranſlations. He had then attained a height which, to any man, but particularly

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to a man of a ſanguine and ſomewhat confident diſpoſition like Macpherſon, is apt to give a degree of careleſſneſs and preſumption, that would rather command than conciliate the public ſuffrage, and, in the ſecurity of the world's applauſe, neglects the beſt means of obtaining it. He thought, it may be, he had only to produce another work like Fingal, to reap the ſame advantage and the ſame honour which that had procured him; and was rather ſolicitous to obtain theſe quickly, by a haſty publication, than to deſerve them by a careful collection of what original materials he had procured, or by a diligent ſearch to ſupply the defects of thoſe materials.

The Committee ſubmits this Report to the Society with conſiderable diffidence. It encountered many more difficulties, and was obliged to beſtow more labour, than it was at all aware of, when it undertook the inveſtigation committed to it by the Society. That labour has, after all, it is ſenſible, effected its purpoſe in a very imperfect manner; but the Committee's inquiries have at leaſt produced ſomething which it believes the Society will receive with conſiderable intereſt, and the public will not read with indifference. One merit it can venture to aſſume to itſelf, without fear of contradiction,—perfect impartiality and candour in its reſearches, and in its Report.

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Report. It has not unfrequently, indeed, withheld evidence, becauſe it did not approach near enough to conviction, and aſſertion, becauſe it was not founded on evidence, which, on a leſs cautious principle, it might have laid before the Society. But it acted, in this reſpect, with a jealouſy and a circumſpection, which it conceived to be due to itſelf, to the Society, and to truth.

APPENDIX

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APPENDIX.

No. I.

LETTERS TO DR. BLAIR.

1. From Sir John Macpherson, dated *Lauriston*, 4th February 1760.

Sir,

I do myself the pleasure of presenting you with a few specimens of Ossian, in his native dress. I could have drawn out many other pieces of greater length, and of more merit, but the inclosed may satisfy Mr Percy's curiosity; and it is unnecessary to trouble you with more of the original at present, as you can, at any time, command all my collection.

The three pieces which I have selected had each a particular title to regard.

Ossian's courtship of Everallin is a short and entire story. It is a monument of the simplicity and dignity

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with which the courtships of princes were carried on in the poet's days.

The Address to the Evening Star claimed attention, on account of its inimitable beauty and harmonious versification. The original of this piece suffered even in the hands of Mr Macpherson; though he has shewn himself inferior to no translator. The copy or edition which he had of this poem is very different from mine; I imagine it will, in that respect, be agreeable to Mr Percy. The gentleman who gave it me, copied it from an old MS. which Mr Macpherson had no access to peruse before his Fingal came abroad.

Ullin's War Song will, I hope, give satisfaction, as it is a singular species of poetry, and refers to a very ancient custom. The gentleman who gave me this valuable piece of antiquity, told me, that he had formerly given Mr Macpherson a copy of it at full length.

All that can be said of my translation of these pieces is, that it is extremely literal, and that it was not attempted to imitate the conciseness and strength of the original.

I can likewise assure you, upon my honour, that I never received any of these originals from Mr Macpherson, nor took the least assistance from his translation. This was so far from being the case, that after I had done my translation, and compared it with his, I was obliged to reject several proper phrases, only because he had used them.

If you forward these specimens to Mr Percy, he certainly will make the requisite allowances for the difference of copies. Others to whom he will perhaps shew them, and who are less known to the manner in which our ancient poetry was preserved, shall not be equally candid. But after you have convinced men of the nicest taste in Europe, it would be a mistake in any one to endeavour to convince those who have not the power of believing, or

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the good taste to discover, the genuineness and antiquity of any work, from the turn of its composition. With the greatest esteem, I am,

Sir,

Your most humble servant,

JOHN MACPHERSON.

2. From SIR JAMES MACDONALD, dated, *Isle of Sky*, 10th October 1763.

DEAR SIR,

YOUR letter to me on the subject of Ossian's poems came at a very unlucky time for giving you any assistance in the enquiry you wish to set on foot. I received your letter yesterday, and have appointed a meeting with all the people of my estate in one end of Sky to-morrow, in order to fix them in their different possessions for some time to come. I had made this appointment many days before I had the pleasure of getting your letter; and am sorry that such unclassical business should have interfered to prevent my pursuing the enquiry immediately, with the vigour I could wish. I am not able to give you a satisfactory answer to any point, in regard to the question at present, but have sat down in order to give you my sentiments of the matter as they occur, without pretending to any thing certain. I must however join with you, first, in expressing my wonder at Macpherson's obstinacy, and I must add his ignorance—who should imagine that his own consciousness of the authenticity of the work was any reason for other people's conviction, or that a man, who was weak enough to doubt of this point, is not worthy of satisfaction? I have said so much to him upon this subject already to no purpose, that, I believe, he has

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abandoned me along with the sceptics long ago. But after wondering at his absurdity, who has it in his power at once to put the matter beyond a question, I doubt much whether any other man can do it. All the manuscripts of consequence are in his hands; and he alone knows from what parts of the Highlands, and from what persons, he collected them. By obtaining these from him, and procuring certificates from the persons in whose possession they have formerly been, and comparing them with the translation, something might be done: but I have little hopes that any manuscripts will be found in the Highlands, which have not already fallen into his hands. These Islands never were possessed of any curious manuscripts, as far as I can learn, except a few which Clanranald had, and which are all in Macpherson's possession. The few bards that are left among us, repeat only detached pieces of these poems. I have often heard, and understood them; particularly from one man called John Mac Codrum, who lives upon my estate of North Uist. I have heard him repeat, for hours together, poems which seemed to me to be the same with Macpherson's translation; but as I had it not along with me, and could not remember it with sufficient exactness, I cannot positively affirm that what I have heard is precisely the same with the translation. As I made no doubt of its being the same, I might also, on that account, give less attention to discover any small differences. The man whom you mention, by the name of John Ossian, lives in Hams. I have heard nothing of him since I came last to this country; but was told, when I was here before, that he could repeat more of these poems than any man in these Islands. I shall contrive to get him, and the other man I mentioned to you, examined in the way you propose, in presence of some people who are proper judges, and get a faithful report of the result of this trial. I am sorry my own engagements will not allow me to remain long enough

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in this country to be present when this trial is made; but I believe I can entrust it to people who will execute it very faithfully. I am sorry I have so little leisure to write to you at present: this will serve only to tell you how little I can do. I wish heartily it were in my power to do more. —If any thing occurs to me to be done, before I leave the country, I will acquaint you; at any rate, I will trouble you with another letter when I have conversed with people who can give some assistance in the investigation.

I perceived this scepticism beginning long ago, and foresaw the difficulty of answering it. Mr Hume certainly sees the consequence of it to the reputation of the poem in a very right light; and it must give great pleasure to any one connected with this country, to obviate this evil; but I have great doubt of such evidences being procured, as the case requires. Though I can do little, nothing shall be wanting, to fight Ossian's cause, that lies in the power of,

Dear Sir,

Your most obedient,
and most humble servant,
J. MACDONALD.

3. From Doctor JOHN MACPHERSON, Minister of Sleat, dated *Sleat*, 14th October 1763.

DEAR SIR,

YOUR letter of September 28th came to hand four days ago. Before I speak to the contents, you will permit me to say, however little that declaration may signify, that not any one in this part of the world can have more sensible pleasure in doing a thing that can afford Dr Blair any degree of satisfaction. The testimonies I had of his benevolence, when last in Edinburgh, give him an undoubted right to all the small services in my power.

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I am not at all surprised that, at a time when the spirit of party, and national quarrels, are risen to such a height, the authenticity of Ossian's poems should be called in question. The glory arising to our country and ancestors, from these noble monuments of genius, cannot miss to give pain to the malevolent in the southern division of the Isle; and, as a great person who has patronized Fingal, must not only be depressed, but made as little as possible in every respect, Mr Macpherson must be involved in the same cruel persecution.

But to come directly to the questions you propose—I am not able to say, with any degree of certainty, that I have seen, but can affirm that I have not perused, any MSS. containing either the whole, or a part, of the poems published by our friend. I never made it my business to find out, or examine, such papers; and the Isle in which I live at present can hardly afford such curiosities. About twenty years back, I was settled in a part of the country where there was an ancient little family, the head of which united the professions of the bard, genealogist, and sennachy. The bard of that family whom I had occasion to know, was a man of some letters, that is to say, he and his ancestors, for many ages, had received their education in Irish Colleges of poetry and history, and understood the Latin tolerably well. The man who was of my acquaintance, was thought an antiquary, in the Highland acceptation of the word, and had some MSS. in his possession. But he is dead long since, and his office abolished, because expensive to his patron Clanranald. That gentleman may very probably have all the MSS. formerly belonging to these old laureats, if preserved, in his custody: and though I understood by your letter that Macleod has undertaken to write to Clanranald upon this subject, I have, immediately after receiving yours, written to the Minister of the parish where these bards lived; and intreated him,

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in the name of our friendship, country, and several things more, to do what you may require at my hands.

To say the truth, I am not sanguine in my expectations from any one manuscript that can be found in our part of the Isles. Mr Macpherson was himself in the Isle where the hereditary sennachies, of whom I have been speaking, resided for several centuries: he saw the friends of these sennachies, and saw Clanranald. Whether he has procured any old papers fit for his purpose from these people, he can inform you best.

As to your second question, I hope to give you some satisfaction within a little time. I shall make the strictest enquiry for all the persons within twenty miles of my house, who can rehearse, from memory, any part of the poems contained in Mr Macpherson's Fingal, &c. His Temora I have not been able to procure. I have begun this work already, and entertain hopes, to me very pleasing, that my endeavours will be attended with some success. Your commands with regard to the exactness of the translation, the pages of the book, and the names of the persons who rehearse from memory, shall be faithfully executed.

I fancy there is no great difficulty in showing how such compositions have been transmitted from one generation to another. The degree of credit due to such traditionary records as have preserved them, I shall in my next letter place in the justest and best light possible.

The people in the western parts of Ross-shire, know a great deal more concerning the old heroic poems, or epic fragments, of the Gaelic tongue, than our islanders of the northern quarter. The people I mean, are those of Gerloch, Lochbroom, and Assin. Mr James Robertson, minister of Lochbroom, may possibly be of use to you, if consulted. I would have written to him upon the head,

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were there any thing of a regular communication between my place of abode and his.

As your Dissertation has done, suffer me to say it, a great deal of honour to our country, I wish, with all my soul, your new intended work may be able to satisfy all reasonable sceptics, and unbelievers, if not to silence the cavils of malignity, and surmises of envy.

You will not, to be sure, be in a hurry to publish your new defence of the authenticity, &c. till all the materials that can be found are collected together. No doubt Mr Macpherson and you act in concert; if so, what he and others will be able to furnish, can hardly fail to prove that the poems are genuine.

I have the satisfaction to subscribe myself, with very high esteem and respect,

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate Brother,

and most obedient servant,

JOHN MACPHERSON.

4. From LACHLAN M'PHERSON of Strathmashie, dated *Strathmashie*, 22d October, 1763.

SIR,

As I hear you have made application in this country for testimonies concerning the authenticity of Ossian's poems, I make bold to send you this letter, of which you may make what use you please. In the year 1760, I had the pleasure of accompanying my friend Mr Macpherson, during some part of his journey in search of the poems of Ossian, through the Highlands. I assisted him in collecting them; and took down from oral tradition, and transcribed from old manuscripts, by far the greatest part of those pieces he has published. Since the

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publication, I have carefully compared the translation with the copies of the originals in my hands, and find it amazingly literal, even in such a degree, as to preserve, in some measure, the cadence of the Gaelic versification. I need not aver, Sir, that these poems are taken in this country to be of the utmost antiquity. This is notorious to almost all those who speak the Gaelic language in Scotland. In the Highlands, the scene of every action is pointed out to this day; and the Historical Poems of Ossian have been, for ages, the winter evening amusement of the clans. Some of the hereditary bards retained by the chiefs, committed very early to writing some of the works of Ossian. One manuscript in particular was written as far back as the year 1410, which I saw in Mr Macpherson's possession. Permit me, Sir, as a Highlander, to make use of this opportunity to thank you, for the pains you have taken to illustrate the beauties, and establish the reputation, of the poems of Ossian, which do so much honour to the ancient genius of our country. I am, with great esteem,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

LACHLAN M'PHERSON.

5. From Doctor JOHN MACPHERSON, Minister of Sleat, dated *Sleat*, 27th November 1763.

DEAR SIR,

Soon after your letter came to hand, I wrote upon the subject of it to several gentlemen who live at a considerable distance from the place of my residence, and did myself the pleasure at the same time to examine, in compliance with your request, all the persons in my neighbourhood that could be of any service.

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I had reason to believe, that the gentlemen would exert all their strength in defending a cause in which Dr Blair, Mr Macpherson, and, let me add, I myself, are so deeply interested, especially as it is a national one; but hitherto I have not had the satisfaction of receiving any the smallest assistance in that way. What I have to say myself, in answer to your questions, after having made all the researches in my power, is in substance as follows:

That I have perused a Gaelic manuscript, containing all the poems translated by Mr Macpherson, or a considerable part of them, I am not able to say; but can honestly affirm, that I have seen a Gaelic manuscript in the hands of an old bard, who travelled about through the Highlands and Isles about thirty years ago, out of which he read, in my hearing, and before thousands yet alive, the exploits of Cuchullin, Fingal, Oscar, Ossian, Gaul, Dermid, and the other heroes celebrated in Mr Macpherson's book.

This bard was descended of a race of ancestors who had served the family of Clanranald for about three hundred years, in quality of bards and genealogists, and whose predecessors had been employed in the same office by the Lords of the Isles long before the family of Clanranald existed. The name of the tribe which produced these hereditary poets and shenachies, was Macmhurich. The last man of the tribe who sustained these two characters with any dignity I knew personally, and conversed with him more than once. He was a man of some letters, like all or most of his predecessors in that office; and had, to my certain knowledge, some manuscripts, in verse as well as prose, in his possession. Whether these manuscripts are now extant, I cannot say, as I live at a great distance from that part of the country where the Macmhurichs were settled, and as I have not yet heard from a gentleman there to whom I have written of late upon that subject.

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That the poems contained in the manuscripts belonging to the Macmhurichs, were identically the same with those published by Mr Macpherson, or nearly so, seems to be abundantly probable. One reason that induces me to entertain this opinion is this; I have conversed with many different persons who had frequently rehearsed, from memory, several parts of the poems translated by that gentleman, long before he was an author; and I can affirm, that these several parts, together with many more of the same kind, and in the same manner, were rehearsed by the Macmhurich's times without number. So much in answer to your first question.

I have, in obedience to your request, made enquiry for all the persons around me who were able to rehearse from memory any parts of the poems published by Mr Macpherson, and have made them to rehearse, in my hearing, the several fragments or detached pieces of these poems which they were able to repeat. This done, I compared with great care the pieces rehearsed by them with Mr Macpherson's translation. These pieces, or fragments, are as follows:

The Description of Cuchullin's Chariot; Fingal, Book 1st, page 11. The rehearsers are, John Macdonald of Breackish, in Strath, Isle of Sky, gentleman; Martin Macilivray, tenant in Slate; and Allan Macaskle, farmer, in Glenelg.

The Episode relating to Faineasolis; Fingal, Book 3d, page 45. The rehearsers are, among many more, John Macdonald of Breackish; Alexander Macdonald, merchant in Slate; John Down, cow-herd there; and John Maclean, carpenter, in the parish of Strath.

The actions of Ossian at the lake of Lego, and his courtship of Everallin; Fingal, Book 4th, page 50. The rehearsers are, Alexander Macdonald, merchant, in Slate;

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Nicol Mackenzie, in the parish of Strath, gentleman; and Ewen Macpherson, schoolmaster, in Glenelg.

Fingal's combat with the King of Lochlin; Fingal, Book 5th, page 62. The rehearsers, Alexander Macdonald, merchant, in Slate; Donald Robertson, tenant there; and Nicol Mackenzie just mentioned, together with many more.

The Battle of Lora; page 111. The rehearsers, Alexander Macdonald, merchant, in Slate; John Maclean, carpenter, in Strath; and Niel Mackinnon, farmer, there.

Darthula; page 155. The rehearsers, Alexander Morison, in the parish of Duirnish, gentleman; Ewen Macpherson, schoolmaster, in Glenelg; and John Down, cowherd, in Slate.

The Combat between Oscar and Ullin, in the Fragments. The rehearsers, John Macdonald of Breackish, Alexander Morison, and John Down, all three abovementioned.

The Lamentation of the spouse of Dargo. Sung by thousands in the Isles.

These are all the pieces of Ossian's poems, as published by Mr Macpherson, known to the rehearsers whom I have had occasion to consult. Had it been in my power to have travelled farther than through my own parish, and that next to it, I have reason to believe that I would have easily found many more such upon record, in the memories of others who have a taste for our old Gaelic compositions. The rehearsers whom I had occasion to consult, have repeated, in my hearing, several other poems which have much of the spirit and manner of Ossian, and are consequently the genuine productions of his muse, or, what is much the same, authentic monuments of that uncommon genius for poetry which once prevailed among our countrymen of ancient times. This, give me leave to say so, you may take upon my word; nor shall I scruple to affirm, that some of these remains or monuments of genius are

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equal, as far as they go, to any thing that Mr Macpherson has yet published. If so, the literary world should do that gentleman the justice to believe, that he is not himself the real author of the compositions he has ascribed to Ossian, or should allow that the Highlands have heretofore produced bards of a character not less exalted than that of which Ossian was possessed, according to Mr Macpherson's account of him.

You desire me to tell impartially how far the translations given by the publisher of Ossian's works agree with the original, as far as I have had occasion to see or hear the latter.

It is, I think, no easy matter to lay down an exact system of rules which a translator should inviolably observe, especially when the work in which he is engaged, is of the poetical kind. Far less is it easy for a critic, a critic abler beyond comparison than I, to determine, whether Mr Macpherson has taken unpardonable liberties in his version; unless that critic should have a number of manuscripts, or one at least, before him. The oral editions given by the several persons who have rehearsed the very same parts of Ossian's poems in my presence, are far from being exactly the same. Some of these rehearsers omitted several whole stanzas, which others repeated before me. Some of them inverted the order of whole sentences, and whole stanzas. Others differed greatly from the rest in the expression, here and there in the sentiments, in the versification, in the names of the heroes, and scenes of action; and that, too, without doing any considerable hurt to the merit of the poem, all things considered.

Those who are ready to believe that Mr Macpherson has given his translation of Ossian's works from an ancient manuscript, cannot pretend to determine that his version is too free, too incorrect, or faulty in any respect, until they are able to compare it with the original contained in

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that manuscript. But those who suppose, or may think, that Mr Macpherson was at the pains to consult several different rehearsers, and to compare their various editions, must suppose, and think at the same time, that he had an undoubted right, like every editor who collates several different manuscripts, to depart from the words of this or that edition, when he saw good reason for so doing, to prefer the diction, sentiments, versification, and order of one to those of another, nay and to throw a conjectural emendation now and then into his version, when he found the original text corrupted by all the rehearsers.

This being admitted, I shall make no difficulty of thinking that the editor of Ossian's works has translated those parts of the original which were repeated in my hearing, I will not say with a servile exactness, but upon the whole inimitably well. I add farther, that he has turned some of the detached pieces, so frequently repeated in this part of the country, from the Gaelic into English, as literally as he ought to have done. Mean time, I can hardly hinder myself from believing, that the original Gaelic stanzas of some poems, rendered into English by him, are, in not a few instances, rather better than those corresponding with them in the translation, however masterly that undoubtedly is.

To come now to your last question. You ask me, in what manner were Ossian's compositions preserved from age to age, and transmitted down to the present, without any material corruptions?

The answer which Mr Macpherson has made himself to this question in his Dissertation concerning the antiquity, &c. of Ossian's poems, seems to me satisfactory enough. Should it be thought necessary to add any thing to what he has said, under that head, I would take the liberty to offer the following observations:—

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Ossian was the Homer of the ancient Highlanders, and at the same time one of their most illustrious heroes. A people who held bards in the highest esteem, and paid withal the profoundest respect to the memory of those who had distinguished themselves among their ancestors by military virtue, would have taken all possible care to preserve the works of an author in whom these two favourite characters, that of the matchless bard and that of the patriot hero were so happily united. The poems of that author would have been emulously studied by the bards of succeeding generations, and committed at the same time to the memory of every one else who had any taste for these admirable compositions. They would have been rehearsed upon solemn occasions by these bards, or by these men of taste, in assemblies wherein the noble exploits of the most renowned chiefs, and the spirited war songs of the most eminent poets, made the principal subjects of conversation. Tradition informs us, that this was one of the principal pastimes of our forefathers at their public entertainments: and I can myself aver, that in memory of hundreds now alive, almost every one of our mightiest chieftains had either a bardling, or an old man remarkably well versed in the poetical learning of ancient times, near his bed every long night of the year, in order to amuse and lull him asleep with the tales of other days, and these mostly couched in verse. Among the poetical tales repeated on these occasions, the atchievements of Fingal, Gaul, Oscar, &c. or, in other words, the works of Ossian, held the first place: nor is that old custom, after all the changes that taste has suffered here, entirely discontinued at this time. When these two customs prevailed universally, or nearly so, when thousands piqued themselves upon their acquaintance with the works of Ossian; when men extremely poor, superannuated, or any how rendered incapable of earning their bread in another way, were sure of finding kind pa-

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trons among the better sort of people, or of being favourably received every where, if intimately acquainted with these works, it was hardly possible that they could either have perished totally or have been greatly adulterated, I mean adulterated to such a degree as would have very much defaced their original beauty, or have entirely destroyed their real excellence.

Again, should we suppose with Mr Macpherson that Ossian lived down to the beginning of the fourth century, it seems plain enough that the compositions of that poet might have been transmitted orally from one generation to another, until letters began to flourish in some degree in the Highlands and Isles. It is certain, beyond any possibility of contradiction, that we have several Gaelic songs preserved among us here, which are more than three hundred years old; and any one who can pretend to be tolerably well versed in the History of Scotland must know, that our ancestors, in the western parts of this kingdom, had the use of lettters from the latter end of the sixth age at least. To attempt a proof of that assertion here, however easy it would be to give a convincing one, would unavoidably engage me in a discussion too long to be comprehended within the compass of a letter. But most certain it is, that we had men of some learning among us from after the period just mentioned, at Icolumkill, and in other western isles, when almost every other part of Europe was overspread with ignorance and barbarity. If so, it must be allowed that we had men capable enough of writing manuscripts. In these manuscripts, the works of Ossian might have been easily preserved; and copies drawn after these originals might, with the same ease, have transmitted his genuine compositions uncorrupted, or nearly so, from one age to another, until we come down to the present generation.

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If we suppose with others, that Ossian was cotemporary with the Irish apostle, and converted by him to the christian faith, the solution of your question is so much the more easy. All the world will allow, that the use of letters was known in Ireland from St Patrick's time; and it must be acknowledged that the sons of Erin were greatly interested in the preservation of Ossian's works, as well as the men of Caledonia. Therefore it may very reasonably be presumed, that some one of St Patrick's disciples would have committed to writing the compositions of that excellent poet, before he himself had left the world, that is to say, before the middle of the fifth century. From the manuscript written by that disciple, numberless copies might have been drawn out from age to age; and as there was a constant intercourse between the Irish of Ulster and the Scots of the western parts of Caledonia, some of these copies would have undoubtedly been imported into the Highlands and Isles from Ireland; especially as the missionaries and bards of that country made a practice of visiting those parts of Scotland in Columba's time, and for many ages thereafter. We learn from history, as well as tradition, that Columba himself, though a saint of the highest character, had a peculiar regard for the bards of his time. It may therefore be very reasonably thought that he had a just value for the works of Ossian, and would have consequently encouraged some one of the scribes about him to take the most effectual method of handing them down to posterity entire and unadulterated.

That the compositions of our bards were committed to writing in the Highlands, after the use of letters began to prevail, there cannot be a reasonable question. I have myself seen more than one folio containing the works of rhymers, whose merit falls infinitely short of Ossian's; and will it be thought that the monuments of genius left

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behind him by the prince of Scottish bards would have been so far overlooked, or despised, as not to obtain the same advantage?

I have not Mr Lhoyd's Archæologia Britannica by me at present, but remember, I think, perfectly well, that in the catalogue he gives of the Irish manuscripts in the duke of Chandos's library, there is one which gives, in verse, an account of the exploits performed by Fingal, Gaul, Oscar, &c. and may perhaps be much the same with the works of Ossian.

I am, with the highest esteem and respect,

Dear Sir,

Your most obedient, and

much obliged humble servant,

JOHN MACPHERSON.

6. From Mr ANGUS MAC NEILL, Minister of Hovemore, dated *Hovemore in South Uist*, 23d December 1763.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,

I was favoured a considerable time since with your very genteel letter concerning the ancient Gaelic poems lately translated and published by Mr Macpherson the poet, and would, long before now, have made some sort of return to it, but that I deferred it from time to time in hopes to collect proper materials to answer your queries; but I have the dissatisfaction to find, that the success of my enquiries on the subject you proposed, has fallen greatly short of my expectations. However, if the few following hints will be of any use, they are at your service.

In answer then to your enquiries, please know that though I do not remember to have seen any manuscripts, or written copies, of the original of any of these poems

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myself; yet the elder Clanranald declared, before another clergyman and myself, that he had himself transcribed above one hundred pages of a large ancient manuscript which treated of the wars of Fingal and Comhal his father; which manuscript has been carried over to Ireland some time ago by a worthless person, in a clandestine manner, and is now, it is thought, irrecoverably lost; but the transcript, he directed Mr Macpherson, when on his tour through the Highlands, to recover out of the hands of one Donald M'Donald, late merchant in the Luckenbooths, Edinburgh, who had got it, though not from Clanranald, with a view to publish it along with some other Gaelic pieces.

Mr M'Donald of Demisdale, a parishioner of mine, declared before me that he remembers to have seen and read, a considerable part of the said ancient manuscript; and rehearsed from memory, before me, some passages of it that agreed exactly with the translation, viz. the terms of peace proposed by Morla in Swaran's name to Cuchullin; Fing. Book ii. p. 26. Likewise, Fingal's orders for raising his standards, his orders to his chiefs before the battle, the chiefs resolutions thereupon of fighting each of them a Lochlin chief; contained in pages 57 and 58 of Fingal, book iv. He concluded with rehearsing the description of the single combat between Fingal and Swaran, which in the original is expressed in the strongest language, and perfectly agreed with the translation, which is very just here and in all the other places I had occasion to compare. The passage alluded to, is Fingal, book v. page 62.

The next I examined was one Archibald M'Lellan, likewise a parishioner of mine, who repeated before me, in Gaelic, Ossian's account of his own courtship of Everallin at the lake of Lego, without any material variation

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from the translation; Fingal, book iv. pages 49, 50, and 51.

Neil M'Murrich, a native of this country, who with his predecessors for nineteen generations back have been the bards and historians of the family of Clanranald, (it being customary with every Highland family of note to have bards and historians of old,) repeated before me the whole of the poem of Darthula, or Clan-Usnoch, with few variations from the translation, which he declared he saw and read, together with many more, in a manuscript which underwent the same fate with the manuscript already made mention of. Declared also, that he is of opinion, the last poem in the collection, Berrathon, is contained in a manuscript which I myself saw him deliver, with three or four more, to Mr Macpherson, when he was in this country, and for which Mr Macpherson gave him a missive, obliging himself to restore it, which shows that in the opinion of both, the manuscript contained something of great importance. John Ossian is yet alive in Harris, and was to be transported to the Isle of Sky, as I was credibly informed, to be examined by Mr James Nicolson, minister of Durinish, otherwise I would have got him examined. Though all that I have above offered will, I fear, be of little consequence towards promoting your undertaking; yet I hope that other Highlanders, better qualified for the purpose, will furnish you with as many testimonies, for the authenticity of these poems, as will enable you to establish with the world the credit due to them. As your concern for truth and for the honour of your country, justly entitle you to the thanks and good wishes of all your countrymen, be pleased to accept of mine, and believe that I am, with great esteem,

Reverend dear brother,

Your affectionate brother, and
most obedient servant,

ANGUS MAC NEILL.

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7. From Mr NEIL MACLEOD, Minister of Ross, dated *Ross in Mull*, 22d January 1764.

REV. DEAR BROTHER,

I received your favour of the 5th of October some time in November last, and I would have acknowledged it long ago if I did not expect to find more satisfactory answers to your enquiries than I could give of myself. My copy of Fingal happened to be borrowed by an acquaintance at a distance; there was some time lost before I could procure another, in a place where there are but very few of them, and where the communication, especially in the winter season, is not easy or frequent. In the mean time, I employed Mr M'Tavish, minister of Morven, to whom you wrote, and who is zealous to give you all the satisfaction in his power, to transmit to you all that Mr Campbell of Octomore, an aged gentleman in his neighbourhood, knows of these poems of Ossian. This man assured me, that, in his younger days, he heard Fingal repeated very frequently in the original, just as Mr Macpherson has translated it. He lived then in the island of Ila: I employed some of my friends there to enquire whether this poem is still exant there, but without success. I was informed also, that a man who died in this island about fifteen years ago, had a manuscript of the poems of Ossian. I wrote to a nephew of his, into whose hands that man's books and papers have fallen, but have had no answer hitherto. I soon will; and if this manuscript can be got, you shall have as particular an account of it as I can give you. I examined all the persons in this or the other parishes in Mull, who have any poems in Gaelic of Fingal, or his heroes. There are still a great many of them handed down by tradition; but

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they are of that kind that Mr Macpherson, I think judiciously rejects, as Irish imitations of the works of Ossian. One Angus Fletcher, a sherriff-officer, was here about two days ago at my desire, he can repeat many of these poems, but none of those Mr Macpherson has translated, except a part of the poem entitled, the Battle of Lora, and that very much corrupted. But from my own memory, I can assure you, that Morla's proposal to Cuchullin, Fingal, b. ii. p. 26, with Cuchullin's answer, and Morla's reply, is a just translation. So is the whole episode of Borbar and Faineasolis, Fingal, b. iii. p. 45 and 46, and Fingal, b. iv. p. 57 and 58, from "we reared the sun beams," &c. to "now like a hundred different winds." I can still repeat some of these in the original. The whole poem of Dar-thula I have frequently heard, but I remember no part of it. All these, and many more, I heard in the Island of Sky, when I was a little boy, from an old man who used to repeat them to me for some tobacco, which I procured him as often as I wanted to hear them. This man died when I was but very young, and I could never since meet with any person that could repeat so many of the poems of Ossian, or so perfectly. I am sorry I cannot give you or the public any more satisfaction on this point. Had such an enquiry been made fifty years sooner, I am persuaded hundreds could attest that Mr Macpherson's translations are really what they pretend to be. With sincere esteem, I am

Your affectionate brother, and
most humble servant,
NEIL MACLEOD.

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8, From Mr ALEXANDER MAC AULAY, dated *Edinburgh*, 25th January 1764.

REV. SIR,

I wrote, as you desired me, to Lieut. Duncan Mac Nicol, of the late 88th Regiment; I received his answer, and now send you as much of it as relates to the subject of your present enquiry.

" I was from home when yours of the 17th ultimo came to this place, (Sockroek in Glenurchy); but since my return, I have been at some pains in examining severals in this country about Ossian's poems, and have found out as follows: Fingal, b. iii. p. 45. " Oscar I was young " like thee, when lovely Faineasollis," &c. to the end of the 3d book. Fing. b. iv. p. 50—" Eight were the " heroes of Ossian," &c. mostly word for word to p. 58, or the end of the 4th book. The story of Orla, in the beginning of the 5th book to p. 71. " Then Gaul and " Ossian sat on the green banks of Lubar"; the battle of Lora mostly; Darthula, p. 155, pretty well to the end of p. 171; Temora, much the same, p. 172 to the end of p. 190; Caric-Thura, p. 207, " Who can reach the " source of thy race, O Connal!" &c. till you come to the passage that begins thus, " Dire was the clang of their " steel."

" Those that know most about the history of Ossian and his poems in this country, are now *no more*; formerly I might, I dare say, make out a great deal more among them. At this very day there are many in this country, who can neither read nor write, that can repeat poems composed by Ossian, at least pretty much in the same strain, which would make a larger volume, if they were all ga-

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thered together, than that which Mr Macpherson has given to the public. The world may say of him and his translations what they please; but I am convinced, for my part, that I heard most of these poems repeated, since I remember any thing at all; and I dare say, at that time, Mr Macpherson could neither read nor write, far less be the author of such a work."

(Signed) DUN. MAC NICOL.

This letter, of which you are at liberty to make what use you please, and the evidence which, in my presence, you had from Mr Macpherson of Stornaway, afford a direct proof that the poems of Ossian are no imposition upon the public. I know nothing stronger that can be offered to remove the doubts that may have been entertained concerning the authenticity of these poems, and, I am persuaded, a single testimony of that kind will give entire satisfaction to every one whose scruples are not founded on prejudice.

I have wrote down the passages which Mr Macpherson repeated in your house; and every one that reads them, allows that they lose by the translation.

Your acquaintance, Mr Fraser, received a letter from Mr Mac Lagan, preacher at Amalrie, in which he mentions some detached pieces he transmitted to Mr Macpherson the translator, particularly several passages in the two last books of Fingal. The poem, called Erragon, or Lora, almost entire, and a poem which bears some resemblance to the opening of Temora. I told you formerly that I saw the originals which Mr Macpherson collected in the Highlands. Mr Fraser will assure you that he saw them likewise, and was frequently present with Mr Macpherson when he was translating them: and no man will say that he could impose his own originals upon us, if we had common sense, and a knowledge of our mother tongue.

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Those who entertain any suspicions of Mr Macpherson's veracity in that respect, do not advert, that, while they are impeaching his honesty, they pay a compliment to his genius that would do honour to any author of the age.

A man of generous sentiments, we may easily suppose, would sacrifice any private consideration to the interest and real honour of his country. However, none but a madman, or a wild enthusiast, could ever think of forfeiting his honesty, and disclaiming the merit of his own compositions, merely to gratify the ridiculous vanity of sharing with thousands the imaginary honour of having been born in the corner of a country that perhaps, fifteen hundred years ago, chanced to produce a bard of some merit. A more absurd motive can scarcely be assigned for the conduct of any man, that is not subject to prejudice of the lowest kind; and yet, ridiculous as it is, Mr Macpherson could have no stronger inducement to ascribe what was really his own composition to an antiquated bard, whose name had never once before been mentioned in the world of letters.

It has been said, indeed, he might be tempted to commit this kind of literary fraud, with a design to excite the curiosity of the public, and by that means procure more attention than he could otherwise expect. But whoever is of this opinion, must be ignorant that Mr Macpherson, let him be never so diffident of his own abilities, has no reason to be apprehensive about the success of his performance. If an author can promise a favourable reception to his book from any thing, it must be from the avowed approbation of men distinguished for judgment and taste. Mr Macpherson had in this respect the satisfaction to find, that the spirit and manner of a few detached fragments, handed about in MSS. and translated with no other view than to satisfy the curiosity of a private gentleman, were so well relished that a larger collection was earnestly de-

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sired, by men upon whose judgment he could, with the most perfect security, rely. Now, if we pay Mr Macpherson the extravagant compliment of supposing him the real author of the several poems in his collection, why should he chuse, without temptation or necessity, to expose himself to the hazard of being detected of an imposture, a thing which every Highlander had in his power, rather than to acknowledge them for his own, when he was so well assured, by some of the best judges of poetical merit in the nation, that they could not fail to give entire satisfaction to every reader that would have taste and judgment to discern their beauties? In this favourable situation, to disclaim them, if they were really his own, and ascribe them to, he did not know whom, would have argued stupidity and folly rather than prudence and diffidence.

If Mr Macpherson had been disingenuous or dishonest enough to impose upon the public, he would undoubtedly have attempted an imposition of a very different kind from that of which some are now pleased to suspect him. He would have made his own use of Ossian's works. Instead of being contented with the humble character of a collector and translator, he would, by the help of a little industry, have transformed and disguised them, so as to pass them for his own compositions, and by that means assumed the more splendid character of an original author, with all the important airs of an heroic poet; for it will not, I presume, be said, that these poems derive all their merit from the name of Ossian, and the consideration of their antiquity. This species of fraud could be detected by Highlanders only, and it might escape even them for some time. As to professed critics, they never could have access to strip him of his borrowed plumes, and expose him as an infamous plagiary. But, in fact, he was as much above the meanness of pilfering Ossian's works,

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as he was unequal to the task of composing the original poems, ascribed to that ancient hero.

Upon the whole, I think it is evident that even a man, who has no access to know the sentiments of Highlanders on this subject, and their unanimous testimony in favour of Mr Macpherson, can very easily satisfy himself that that gentleman could have no rational inducement to impose upon the public; and, at any rate, could not possibly succeed in doing it, in the manner of which some are pleased to suspect him; and it proceeds entirely from your good natured indulgence to their unreasonable prejudices, that you are at so much pains to satisfy them in idle doubts, which you never entertained yourself, and for which one would be certainly laughed at in the Highlands, where, if they complain at all of Mr Macpherson, it is because he has omitted many beautiful pieces of Ossian's works, and not that he has corrupted them by any additions of his own.

The public do not know how much they are indebted to you in this affair. If they have received any pleasure from their acquaintance with the works of Ossian, they owe it all to you. The remains of the Celtic bard would have been irretrievably lost, if you had not interposed to rescue them from the total oblivion to which they would very soon have been consigned. The Highlanders, at least, are very sensible of this; and they acknowledge also, that you have enabled them to comprehend more perfectly the merit and beauties of their favourite bard. I am,

Reverend Sir,

Your most obedient

humble servant,

ALEXR. MAC AULAY.

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9. From Mr DONALD MACLEOD, Minister of Glenelg, dated *Glenelg*, 26th March 1764.

SIR,

Sometime before I was favoured with yours of November last, with regard to the authenticity of Ossian's poems. I had a letter from Mr Alexander Mac Auley, the Highland chaplain, upon the same subject. I then at his desire, set about examining the original poems, and the traditionary stories of Fingal and his host; and got all within my reach who preserved on memory any part of either. This I found a work of some time and labour, but could not without it answer your queries.

There are many poems ascribed to Ossian, more than Mr Macpherson has translated; many of which, I dare say, he never heard; and of these not a few (in my humble opinion) of as much poetical merit as any he has inserted. Macpherson took too little time in the Highlands and Western Isles to be able to have collected the whole of them; for, as the works of Ossian are dispersed all over the Highlands, there is not a clan, through whose lands you travel, but you will find some one of these poems among them, which is not to be met with any where else.

The traditionary history of Fingal, though much intermixed with fable, throws a good deal additional light upon the customs and manners of those remote times. The old Highlanders commonly entertained one another with the repetition of these poems, and diverted the tediousness of the winter nights. When they met to watch the dead corpse of their friends, they spent a considerable part of the night in repeating the poems, and talking of the times of Fingal. They often laid wagers on such occasions, who should repeat most of the poems; and to have a store of them on memory, was reputed not a despicable acquisition. I know

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some old men who value themselves for having gained some of these wagers. The Highlanders, at their festivals and other public meetings, acted the poems of Ossian. Rude and simple as their manner of acting was, yet any brave or generous action, any injury or distress, exhibited in the representation, had a surprising effect towards raising in them corresponding passions and sentiments.

It was in my house that Mr Macpherson got the description of Cuchullin's horses and car, in book 1st, p. 11, from Allan Mac Caskie, schoolmaster, and Rory Macleod, both of this glen: he has not taken in the whole of the description; and his translation of it, (spirited and pretty as it appears, as far as it goes,) falls so far short of the original in the picture it exhibits of Cuchullin's horses and car, their harness and trappings, &c. that in none of his translations is the inequality of Macpherson's genius to that of Ossian so very conspicuous.

The battle of Lena, in book 2d, is still preserved by tradition in this country, but with this variation, that the proposal of giving up his wife and dog, in p. 26, as the only condition on which peace would be granted, was made by Magnus, king of Lochlin, to Fingal, and not by Swaran to Cuchullin. It was a principle with Fingal, from which he never deviated, not to engage in battle without first offering the best terms of peace his honour would permit. Agreeably to this principle, he sent proposals to Magnus; in return to which, Magnus demanded his wife and dog, which Fingal rejecting with indignation, the battle began.

I have heard the poem, in book 3d, relating Fingal's voyage to Lochlin, the snares laid for him by Starno, death of Agandecca, how for his cruelty and perfidiousness he took immediate revenge on Starno, when, p. 38, he eyed his valiant chiefs, his valiant chiefs took arms.

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The poem in book the 4th, is handed down pretty entire in this country, in which each of Fingal's chiefs singles out the chief among the enemy he was to fight, leaving to Fingal the honour of engaging the king of Lochlin. The description of the sun-beam, Fingal's standard, does not come up to the beauty and spirit of the original. Along with that of the sun-beam, there is in the original a particular description of the standards of the seven principal chiefs of Fingal, which are all so inimitably beautiful that I cannot imagine how Macpherson has omitted them in his translation. Dermod, who led the right hand of the army to that battle, (as it is expressed in the original,) had a standard which, in magnificence, far exceeded the sun-beam. He is, by the tradition of this country, said to be the predecessor of the Campbells.

We have the poem containing the battle of Lochlego, and a good part of that relating the war of Inis-thona, in page 104.

It would take up too much room, and I think it is not necessary that I go through all the poems in the collection, of which we have pieces joined to other poems, and sometimes parts of two or three poems thrown together into one.

Mr Macpherson, in his journey through the Highlands, put it upon me to look out for the poem called Cath, or the battle of Benedin. I have since got it, but not till after the book was published. The battle is the most memorable of Fingal's exploits; and, I humbly think, the poem is the most finished of Ossian's works.

Upon the whole, I know not any capable of doing that justice to the original, which Mr Macpherson has done. One thing I'm sorry for, his having omitted the description which Ossian gives of Fingal's ships, their sails, masts, and rigging, their extraordinary feats in sailing,

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the skill and dexterity of his men in working them, and their intrepidity in the greatest storms—of which he gives the most striking description. I can account for it no other way than his having been born in Badenoch, one of the most inland parts of this kingdom, where not having access to be acquainted with that kind of imagery, he did not therefore perhaps understand the original poems.

With regard to the authenticity of the poems, they were, by the traditions of our forefathers, as far back as we can trace them, ascribed to Ossian, and to the most remote period of time, of which we have any account. It is a word commonly used in the Highlands to this day, when they express a thing belonging to the most remote antiquity, to call it, fiountachk, *i. e.* belonging to the time of Fingal. I know not a country in the Highlands, which has not places that are famous for being the scenes of feats of arms, strength, or agility, of some of the heroes of the race of Fingal. However much the several clans differ in the traditionary history of their respective families, they are all agreed, as far as ever I could learn, with respect to the genuineness and authenticity of Ossian's poems.

But the most effectual method, I presume, of satisfying the doubts of the gentlemen who deny Highlanders the honour of these monuments of the genius and prowess of their ancestors, is to invite them to the Highlands, and to bring interpreters along with them, that they may examine the matter themselves. You may assure them of a hospitable reception; and wherever they go to, the gentlemen and clergy will find out to them the old men who still have in memory most of the works of Ossian, and the traditionary history of the Fingalians. I would engage that they should return home sufficiently satisfied that these poems belong to the time and country to which they are ascribed. If any other material question occurs to you

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upon this subject, I shall make all the enquiry I can for the clearing it up.

I beg the favour you make my most respectful compliments to Principal Robertson. I am,

Sir,

Your most obedient
humble servant,
DONALD MACLEOD.

10. From Mr DONALD MACQUEEN, Minister of Kilmuir, in the Isle of Sky, dated *Kilmuir*, 17th April 1764.

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,

I wrote you some months ago an answer to a letter I had from you about the authenticity and antiquity of Ossian's poems, and though I am not sure whether you received it or not, I cannot help prevailing with myself to acquaint you further, by a person who goes from here to Edinburgh, that I had for these twenty days with me a rehearser of ancient songs, whom Sir James Macdonald ordered to see me from Long-island. He had little more to say for your purpose, than what I acquainted you of already, and, I believe, farther discoveries would be too late for the present edition. I have heard the description of Cuchullin's car repeated by severals, with some variations: it is very grand in the original; there are four horses described in it, with a long string of epithets applied to each, of which the translator dropped a few through his fingers. It is surprising to find some learned critics doubt that Cuchullin was master of such a car, who cannot be ignorant that Cassivelaunus made use of them against Cæsar, that Galgacus had them at the Grampian hills, Etdocilis rector rostrati Belga Covini,

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Lucan. Covinus, or Covinarius, seems to have been derived from the word Coffin, in the Teutonic language, which was a branch of the old Celtic; and though it was imported to England very probably by the Saxons, it is lost in the Gaelic. Our fathers, who were in use to carry their dead betwixt two horses to the congregation-house of all living, called a coffin *carbaid*, which is the very word that Ossian uses every where for a car; so that your letter is very expressive of my idea of Cuchullin's car.

I have just now before me a poetical relation, by Ossian, of the interview betwixt Fingal and his friends, and Luno the son of Leven, who made the swords of which I sent you a description in the postscript to my last, in which Luno is pointed out as a very wild savage, going upon one leg, with a staff in his hand, clad in a mantle of black hide, with an apron of the same stuff before him, and his complexion much of the colour of his garb, skipping off to his smiddy with the fleetness of a March wind, and the bobbing of the hard untanned skin behind him, was the principal point of view as he flew over every rising ground before them. Though Cæsar had not said, *Britanni interiores pellibus sunt vestiti*, I know it must have been then so, as they could only have learned the manufacture of cloaths and linens, from what they saw among the Romans, or from strollers from Gaul, who might have been led to the secret of cloth-making by their neighbourhood with the Roman Colony, or with Massilia; but it seems, in Cæsar's time, few or no experienced manufacturers had found their way to our country; yet, in a poem of Ossians, whose scene lies in Ireland, (it is no other than his own courtship with Everallin), I find mention made of the Belgæ and Teutones, though this is omitted by the translator. The first came, very probably, from the colony of

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that people in South Britain, and the Teutones from Scandinavia; so that, as the Celtic nations on the continent, who were in perpetual motion, some one way or other, were coming in frequent detachments to the British Isles, it is likely the leaders of tribes, and the other better sort of people, would have known something of the use of cloaths in Ossian's time. But the lower classes, I mean those who were inferior in valour, or servile mechanics, if they had other than smiths I know not, would have only worn the sagum, like Luno. Sagum, I am informed by two classical writers, is a Galuic word, which is no other than Sheag or Sac, a hide; though it was afterwards applied to any square loose covering, made use of by the military men among the Celts and Romans. I may fairly conclude from this observation, that Ossian sung when the pure original sagum was the dress of many among the British Celts.

I found the genealogy of Aldo, who carried off Erragon's queen, in the following words, in this rehearser's edition: "Aldo, the son of Leven, the son of Lir; one descended of the people of Ti", I take this Ti to be the Celtic divinity Tis, (the Dis of Cæsar) and the people of whom Aldo was originally descended, to be the Titanes or Teutones; for our European forefathers flattered their vanity very much in deriving their origin from some of their favourite deities, as the Germans pretended to have descended of Tuiston, by his son Mannus. I am sure this genealogy of Aldo hath the character of high antiquity, higher than the general belief of the christian system in this country. Enough of this dry stuff.

The unconquerable aversion which the Druids had against committing any of their poetical works to writing, could not miss of bringing the most of them to a period at the dissolution of their policy. The missionaries from Icolumkill to the Western Isles and

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the neighbouring continent were very numerous. There are the remains of about thirty places of worship in this and the two neighbouring parishes, besides monasteries. These reformers were certainly animated with the usual zeal of extinguishing the old religion, with all its appurtenances. The sacred hymns suffered in this devastation, for there is not one couplet of them existing. You will perhaps be surprised to hear, that the goddess of Victory, Andate, (the Andraste of Dio,) who had a temple at Camalodunum, had a particular veneration paid her in this part of the world. There are no less than the remains of four places of worship for her in this island: the most considerable of them lies within an half mile of the castle of Dunvegan, (Anaid in Buy) of which Macleod will give you a description. As human sacrifices were offered at her shrine, the christian missionaries must have been greatly shocked at the priests who officiated at these bloody rituals; in so far that, to this day, when we talk of a cruel savage, we call him a Druid. A little reflection will easily account for the loss of the sacred poems, as well as for the little notice taken of religion in the heroic ones. Perhaps it would have been construed a sacrilegious encroachment on the holy office, to mention the concerns of religion in profane songs; or, if any such mention was made, the rehearsers in after times would have been taught to drop it, as an abomination to christian ears. I should ask your pardon for obtruding all this trash upon you, but believe me to be, very respectfully,

Reverend and dear Sir,
Your very affectionate
humble servant,
DON. MACQUEEN.

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P. S.—I have a just esteem for the translator's genius; and believe me, after the narrowest search I could make, that there is a foundation in the ancient songs for every part of his work; but I am apt to believe, also, that he hath tacked together into the poem, descriptions, similes, names, &c. from several detached pieces; but of this I can give no demonstration, as I met only with fragments.

11. From Lord Auchinleck, dated *Auchinleck*, 2d October 1764.

Reverend Sir,

In the short visit you favoured me with, you told me of your intending to publish a new Dissertation on your friend Ossian; principally to instruct the antiquity of the book, and that it is not an imposture. Thinking on that subject, a particular occured to me, which you'll judge if proper to come into this new work, which I long to see. What I have in view is, an intrinsic proof of antiquity from a remarkable passage or expression which we meet with more than once in Ossian. When a hero finds death approaching, he calls to prepare his deer's horn, a passage which I did not understand for a good time after Fingal was published, but came then to get it fully explained accidentally. You must know that in Badenoch, near the church of Alves, on the high-way side, are a number of Tumuli. No body had ever taken notice of these, as artificial, till M'Pherson of Benchar, a very sensible man, under an apprehension of their being artificial, caused to cut up two of them, and found human bones in them, and at right angles with them a red deer's horn above them. These burials plainly have been before christianity, for the corpse lay in the direction of

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north and south, not in that of east and west; and as Fingal was published before any of these Tumuli were opened, which you will get attested by Benchar, and the people he employed in the works, this seems to make strong for the antiquity. I am,

Reverend Sir,

Your most obedient

humble servant,

ALEX. BOSWELL.

P. S.—I was so much pleased with your former Dissertation, that I could not help throwing out to you what is above.

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No. II.

1. ORIGINAL OF THE TESTIMONY OR DECLARATION OF HUGH M'DONALD OF KILLEPHEDER, IN THE ISLE OF SOUTH UIST.

Tha uirid agus uirid eile is a ta iad ag radh, thiuntaidh Mac a Phersoin, re faotin an diudh do shaothair Oisein, aig daoine nach faca riamh Mac a Phersoin, agus cuid eile nach cuala iomradh air ainm, agus ag nach bhuil focal bearla.

Tha na laoidhean air an cur sios anns a chaint a bha ag ant shluagh anns an àm, far a bhuil moran fhocal nach bhuil gnathaichte san aimsirse, agus nach tuigemid, agus a leigte air dichuimhne buileach, mar biodh laoidhean Oisein aguin gus an cuamail na ar cuimhne, le cuideach a bhard, agus shean daoine bhios ga mineachadh.

Gad nach faidhear na h-aon laoidhean cho iomlan ag na h uile duine, gidheadh gheibhir an aon seadh annta anns a h uile aite; agus cha n fhaidhear ann an cearn ar bi gu bhuil aon laoidh tha air chuimhne a breugnachadh a h aon eile na an aghaidh a cheile.

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Gad a chuirte deachin air a h uile duine thuigeas na laoidhinse, cho foghluimte is gam bi e, cha burrain e tiunntadh, gu bearla na go canail air bi eile, ar chor is gu freagradh iad cho math sa tha iad anns a chanail andrinradh an toiseach iad; iddir cha b' urrin e an deanamh ann am bearla agus aris an tiunntadh go Gaedhlic anns am biodh cnaimh agus smior na fior chanail.

Ga be air bi a ta scriobhadh an aghaidh Oisein, agus ag radh nach do fhag e bardachd ar an Fheinne, agus ar an deantanas, feuchadh e faidh e aona bhard ann an aite air bi, na ann an canail air bi, is urran bardachd a dheanamh co math sa rinn Oisein. Is e mo bharoil nach fearr a shealladh a shaothair ann comhairde re laoidhean Oisein na gad theanninse re labhairt bearla, canail nach do dhionnsaich mi riamh. A ta so co firinneach is gad thug cuid do na Seana bhaird an diaigh Oisein, oidhrep ar a leantuin, nach bhuil duine air bi aig a bhuil eolas an bardachd, nach ainich, air a cheud eisteachd, saothair Oisein bho shaothir neach air bi eile.

A ta Oisein ag radh gu ro baird ann, roimhe fein, a bha ann re 'n linn. A ta Oisein ag seinn gaisge na Feinne mar chuala, agus mar a chunnaic e, ma 'n do fhas e aosda, agus bho 'n aimsir sin bha filidhe ann an teaghlichin ar Ghaidhledochd bha gleidhe cuimhne bho linn go linn ar seannachas agus ar bardachd. Bha na tighearnan agus na h-uachdarain tabhairt duais do na bardaibhse, agus fadsa bha iad ag deanamh so, bha na h uile bard, a bharachd ar a bhardachd fein, gleidhe cuimhne ar saothair nam bard bha ann roimhe, agus mar sin bha saothair Oisein, mar a bhardachd a b' urramaiche, ga cumail ar cuimhne; ach bho na chaidh an riogh do Shaghsan, agus a sguir na h uachdarain mean ar mhean do gleidhe meas agus thabhairt duais do na baird, chaidh na baird as, ar chor is gun deachaidh moran dhe n tseann bhardachd mu lar, gad

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ata cuid mhath dhi fathasd re fhaoitin: agus mura biodh Mac a Phersoin ar cus saoithreach a ghabhail re cuid dhi chur cruinn anns an àm an drinn e, bhiodh laoidhean Oisein ar chall na bu mho.

Ata còdach nas leor gu robh teaghlaichean Gaidhealoch ag cumail bhard. A ta daoine beo, agus mi fein a h-aon dhiu chunnaic cuid dhe na bairdse nan cònuidh ann na fearuin a bha aca bho na h-uachdarain mar dhuais agus mar oidhreachd ar son a ghnothaichse, agus feudidh sinn ainm nam bard agus nàm bailtean a bha aca innseadh an diudh. Aig teaghlach Mhāc Dhònuil be Jain Mac Codrum am bard mo dheridh, agus bha duais aige bho Shir Semas, agus bho 'n Mhorair a bhrathair: roimhe sin Donnacha Mac Ruairi ag a robh achadh nam bard ann an Troternis mar fhearan oidhreachd, agus tha a shliochd fein agus sliochd a shinnsear ar sloinidh clann a bhaird; agus gad thachra do h aon dhiu gun e fein a bhi na bhard, bha mar fhiachaibh air cuimhne chumail ar seanachais agus ar bardachd nan aosdàn a bha ann roimhe. Gus a dhearbha a mheas a bha ag na h uachdarain air na baird: Nuair a chuir Mac Leoid bhuaidh Mac Ille Riabhich agus a ghabh e fear eile na àite, thug Mac Dhonuil, ged a bha bard aige fein, fearran cha ann an Cillemhoire an Troternis, ris an can iad baile mhic Ille Riabhich gus an diudh.

Ag teaghlach mhic Mhic Ailen bha clann Mhuirich feadh iomadh linn nam baird, agus bha mar fhiachaibh ar a h uile h aon diubh foghlum thabhart dha mhac no dha oidhre ar chor is gu leughadh agus gu scriobhadh e seanachas. Ata lathair fathasd am brosnachadh Catha rinn Nial mòr Mac Mhuirich do chlann Donuil ann an Cathgairbhach, man cuairt do cheithir cheud bliadhna roimhe so.

Ata daoine mearachd tha ar bharoil nach robh caoimhneas na fialachd, deadh rùin na mordhalachd inntin, fos-

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gaireachd cridhe, na carthanachd ann, an àm na Feinne, agus nach robh eolas na cleacha aca air beasaibh matha ar bi; ach gur hann bho cheann ghairid thainig na subhailcinse na ar measg. Na aghaidh so, feadaidh sinn a dheanamh soilleir gur h ann a chaidh na subhailcinse mhilleadh agus a chur ar fogra bho na thoisich daoine re gaol a ghabhail ar airgiod, ar saoghaltachd agus ar fhiarachd thrailleoil, a thug oealgaireachd na ar measg. Ach roimhe sin bha daoine ag àrach duineolachd, bha iad blachridheach, cunmhalach, agus seasmhach, dha 'n cairdin, na sgiath agus nan dion dha 'n duine lagchuiseach, ardaigneach, ceannspredhoil, agus cruadalach, gus an naimhden a smachdhachadh.

Ata ainm nan ciadan aiteachan ann sa Ghaidhealdochd annsa robh iad nan cònai agus ag tathaich; tha na comharan agus an tuairisgeal a fregairt do sheanachas Oisein a thanig a nios bho linn gu linn, air faotin fathasd, tha ainmean nan daoine bha ann re linnean, agus roimhe, agus na fineachan a thainig bhuadh, ag dearbhadh gum b' Albanaich an Fheinne, agus ge bo theireadh na aghaidh, a ta daoine re fhaotain, a shloinneas liansgaridh fineachan arruid air an èis dha 'n ionnsaidh.

A ta seadh ann an ainm nan aiteachan, agus nan daoine nach fhèadar a mhineachadh ann an cànail ar bi eile, ach annsa Ghaidhlic, agus a ta bardachd Oisein co anbhar fhlathoclach is nach b' urrain neach anns antshaoghal a tionntadh co ealonta bhrìgheil bhinneoclach, thaitneach, ann an cànail ar bi eile sa ta i anns an fhior Ghaidhlic; ata so ag taisbeanadh agus ag dearbhadh nach h ann bho cheann ghairid, ach bho shean a rinneadh i.

Bharachd ar sin gheibhir anns a h uile cearn dhe 'n Ghaidhealdochd iomadh dearbhadh ar tuigse agus gliocas agus deabheas na sean laoch air a bhuil Oisein ag iomra. Is lionmhor cuimhneachan ar an gniomharaibh re fhaicin a ta dearbhadh gu robh aca innleachdan agus teamachd gus

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iomadh nith dheanamh, nach bhuil daoine anns an aimsirse nan urrain a dhealbh ce mar a rinneadh iad.

Ameasg nan cumhachdan ris am beigin do 'n Fheinne a bhi ag cogadh, gus an riaghladh, agus an criochan fein a dhion, na gu cuideachadh le cumhachdan cardeil, a ta iomradh aguin ar Righ an domhain mhoir, agus cha robh duine ann ris an coslaichir an t ainmse ach ri uachdaran na Roimhe, a cheannsaich barachd dhe 'n t-shaoghal ar aon neach ar a bhuil seanachas.

Ged thainig Lochlanaich aris fada an deigh na Feinne, ghleidh na Gaidheil, sliochd na Feinne, duthaich, cànail, agus deantanas an sinnsire.

Cho mor is gum bi cliu neach ar bi ar son foghlum eile, tha cur teagamh ann saothair Oisein, agus ag radh gur rud ùr a ta ann, shaoilin gu bhuil nas leor an aghaidh amharais dhaoine a ta ann an aineolas, agus an dorchadas ma dheàdhain na canail air a bhuil iad aig tabhar baroil, nach bhuil, agus nach robh, Gaidhel riamh a chuir teagamh air bi, agus nach robh creideachdain, ann saothair Oisein, agus nach cual iomradh bichionta ar na daoine ar an do thug e seanachas. Mar is faide air an ais a lorgaigher iad, is ann as treassa dhearbhair an còdach.

Cha chòdach an aghaidh bardachd Oisein a bhi ann bho shean, a radh nach bhuil a bheag a dhaoine ann is urrain a meorachadh gu h-iomlan; is ainnibh duine ged a leaghas, agus ged a chluinneas e bardachd, a ghleidheas moran ar cuimhne dhi, mach bho dhuine ghabhas mar uallach ar e ar son teachdantir: is leor a radh na aghaidh so gu bhuil na miltin gus an diudh annsa Ghaidheldochd is urrain blaidhin do shaothair Oisein a mheorachadh do rèir is mar a ghabhadh iad tlachd dhiu, na thaitneadh iad re n'iomadh aignidhean fa leth; agus mur do rinn Oisein bardachd, cia mar a fheudadh i bhi ar mairthean agus re a faotain anns na h-oilenibh; anns na cearnaibh iomalachse agus feadh a chuid eile dhe 'n Ghaidheldochd?

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Ata fios ag a h-uile duine gu ro luchd foghlum iomadh ceud bliadhna ann an I Cholumchille ; na lorg sin bha foglum coitchinte feadh na Gaidheldochd, agus chain eil teagamh nach robh laoidhean Oisein aca scribhte a measg a h-uile foglum eile ; ach an uair a threig iad I Cholumchille agus a chaidh iad do Ghlascho, thug iad leo an cuid leobhraichin far an robh daoine ag nach robh uirid mheas ar Gaidhlic.

Ach is e buille is truime fhuair a chanailse riamh, gun deachaidh an teaghlach righeil do Shaghsan, agus gu robh mor uaislin na Gaidheldochd ga 'n leantuin ; bha iad sin aig tabhart cleachdai, agus canail Shaghsan agus na Galltachd air an ais.

Bha barachd coimeasgadh bho 'n aimsir sin eador Gaidhel agus Gaill, agus bha riaghladh na rioghachd uile ag aidh-reapacha gus a chanailse chur as, gus a robh na Gaidhel, lion beg is beg ag call an tlachd do ghnathachadh, agus do mheasalachd canail neartmhoir an sinnseara, ar chor is nach mor nach deachaidh iad air chall gu leir. Cha b'ionnan so, is do na Gaidhil Eirionach ag nach robh urid chocheangal ri canail air bi eile, agus ar an abharsin a ghleidh ant sheann lamh scriobhaidh Ghaidhealdach gun truaileadh an dèigh dhi dol a cleachda annsa Ghaidheldoch. Bu chleachdach le uaislin na Gaidheldochd scriobhadh ann a Laidin agus an Gaidhlic mu 'n tainig Bearla na measg. Be Ruairidh mòr, ceannard shil Leoid, an t uachdaran mu dheridh anns na duchannanse a lean ris a Chleachdasa.

Thainig e gu ar niunsaidh ann seanachas gach cearn dhe 'n duthaich bho shean, gu robh Oisen ro aosda, agus gun robh e re tamail gun fhradharc ann an deridh a laidhin ; na lorg so a ta e bho chian na ghna fhocal annsa Ghaidheldochd a radh re duine aosda a chaill a chairdin agus a luchd colais, " gu bhuil e mar Oisein an déidh na Feinne."

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A ta so uile, agus moran a bharachd a fheadar a radh ag dearbhadh gu soilleir gu robh Oisen ann, agus gur cinreach firineach nachrobh riamh a choimeas ann.

Chaidh so a scriobhadh ann an Tigh-Ghesri an dala lodeug dhen cheud mhios dhe an fhaoghar a bhliana ochd ceud dèg bho Chriosd le Maighstir Edhmund Mac Cuinn Ministeir Bharrai, bhar labhairt Huisteon Mhic Dhonuil.

Chaidh so a leaghadh ann a lathair Mhaidser Alastair Mhic Dhonuil Valai, Caiptin Jan Mhic Illeoin Bhoresai, Eoghain Dhonuil Ghriminish, Mhaighstir Seumas Mhic Cuinn Ministeir ann am beanntinin na Herridh, agus Ruairi Mhic Neil, fear òg Hirt, a thubhairt farlaimh mar aon ged a bha na labhair Huisteon Mac Dhonnil ro mhath mar dhearbhadh ar saothair Oisein, gum b' fhurasta moran a bharachd a radh gus a dheanamh amach agus a dhaingneachadh gu robh an t àrd fhili Oisen ann bho chian, agus nach cualas riamh iomradh ar a shamhailte.

2. TRANSLATION OF THE FOREGOING TESTIMONY.

THERE is infinitely more to be found among us, than what Macpherson is said to have translated of the works of Ossian: and that too among persons who never saw that man, who never heard of his name, and who are totally ignorant of the English language.

The poems are composed in the language of the times to which they refer. They contain many words and phrases now obsolete, and understood by very few. These ex-

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pressions must have ceased to form a part of our tongue, were they not found in the poems of Ossian, and illustrated or quoted by other bards and aged men, who frequently allude to them.

Though we do not find these poems to correspond precisely in every expression over all the Highlands and Isles, when repeated by different persons, they all correspond in substance; and there is not one instance, in any corner of this country, in which one poem is found contrary to the rest, or in opposition to their general character. And though it were attempted to make the ablest scholar translate these poems into English, or any other tongue, he surely could not transfuse into them the merits of the original; but still less could he (as is alledged) first compose them in English, and then turn them into such Gaelic as should retain the bone and marrow of their own true language.

Let the opponents of Ossian then point out to us poetry of equal merit with his, composed in any language, not an original one, and in a fictitious one, and referring to a nation and a history altogether fabulous. I suspect they would expose themselves to ridicule by the attempt. Many poets after Ossian endeavoured to copy or to imitate him; but there is no man that understands our tongue, or the nature of our poetry, but will, on the first hearing of the first verses, easily distinguish their poems from his.

He mentions some poets who lived before him, and who sung the exploits of the heroes of their age: he himself, in like manner, sings the deeds of the *Féinne*, as he had heard or witnessed them in his earlier years. He was succeeded by other bards, who transmitted the history and poetry of their countrymen from generation to generation. The chieftains, and men of influence in the Highlands, rewarded and supported those bards, who not only composed original poems, but also recited the compositions of

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their predecessors. The poems of Ossian, whose superiority over all bards was never called in question, were their peculiar care.

Hence we are under some obligations to Macpherson, whose industry, at a very critical period, has saved some of the poems of Ossian, which must otherwise have probably perished. The race of our bards is, however, extinct, and much of our poetry is lost, though a great deal still remains.

We have certain evidence of the fact, that bards were always kept in the great Highland families. There are many men still living, who have seen bards residing on lands which they held of our chiefs as an inheritance, and a consideration for their services. I remember some of them myself. The names of the bards, and of the lands they enjoyed, I can tell on this very day. In Macdonald's family, the last bard was John Mac Codrum, who had lands and maintenance from Sir James Macdonald, and from his brother and immediate successor, the late Lord Macdonald. John Mac Codrum's predecessor in the office of bard to the family of Macdonald, was Duncan Mac Ruari, who possessed as bard, and by inheritance, the lands in the district of Trotternish, in Sky, called *Acha na 'm Bard,* (or Bard's fields); and his descendants, as well as the collateral branches of his family, are to this very day called Clann a Bhaird, the bard's children or posterity.

The Mac Vurich's were, for many generations, family bards to the Macdonalds of Clanranald. They held their possessions on the special condition of educating their heirs for the office of bard, and of qualifying them to transmit, *in writing*, the history and poetry connected with the family and their country. There is still extant a poem, composed by one of them, by Niel Mor Mac Vurich, to the Macdonalds, immediately before the battle of Garioch or

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Harlaw, which was fought near four hundred years ago. It is called Brosnachadh cath Ghàriach, (invigorating address at the battle of Garioch,) and is well known.

As a proof of the estimation in which the bards were held, I need only mention, that when the chief of the Mac Leods dismissed Mac Gille Riabhich, his family bard, Macdonald received him hospitably, though he had always his own family bard, and gave him lands on the farm of Kilmorey, in Trotternish, which retain to this day the name of Baille mhic Gille Riabhich, (Mac Gille Riabhich's town.) Now, it is well known that when the persons succeeding in the usual line to the office of family bard, happened to have no talents for original composition, he was nevertheless bound by his situation, to learn, and to transmit, to his heir in office, the best compositions of the bards who went before him.

Those men are much mistaken who believe that neither kindness nor hospitality, disinterested magnanimity, generosity of heart, nor sympathy of soul, were conspicuous among the *Féinne:* that neither the knowledge nor practice of virtue existed in their times; but that these have lately been introduced into our country.

n direct opposition to such conjectures, we can easily prove, that the noblest virtues have been ruined, or driven into exile, since the love of money has crept in amongst us; and since deceit and hypocrisy have carried mercenary policy and slavish, sordid avarice into our land. Before this modern change, our chiefs cherished humanity. They were warm-hearted, determined, and immoveable, in supporting their friends, and always proved the shield and shelter of the feeble. They possessed elevation of sentiment, an independent spirit, and unshaken fortitude, which were the defence of their friends, and the destruction of their own enemies, and the enemies of their country.

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There are a hundred places in the Highlands and Isles, which derive their names from the *Féinne*, and from circumstances connected with their history. The properties of the grounds, and the traditions universally attached to them, correspond with the strain of Ossian's poetry. These traditions have been handed down from generation to generation, and still exist. The names of men, and of clans or tribes, either prior to Ossian, or coeval with him, which we can all mention, prove that the *Féinne* inhabited our Highlands and Isles; and we have genealogies of some families which reach back to these early times, and to some of the heroes whom he celebrated.

The names of men, and of places, are significant to a degree, found only in an original language: and Ossian's expressions are so peculiarly and wonderfully happy, that no man can translate or change them, without losing the aptness, substance, melody, and perfect beauty, which distinguish the pure Gaelic of Ossian alone, through all his works.

Besides, we find over the Highlands and Isles many monuments of the good sense and ingenuity of Ossian's heroes. These evince that they possessed arts that enabled them to perform works, of which their degenerate descendants cannot comprehend the method, nor even conceive the possibility, of execution.

Among the powers with which the *Féinne* had to contend, in defence of their lands and liberties, or in support of their allies, we have mention made of "The king of the World." There is no character to which we can suppose this epithet applicable, excepting the Sovereign of Rome, whose controul extended over more of our Globe, than that of any other recorded in history.

The Scandinavians (Lochlinnich) who invaded the Isles and Highlands, long after the times of the *Féinne*, were not able to change the language, or to destroy the monuments

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of our ancestors: for the descendants of these heroes maintained their independence on the main land, and retained the historical traditions and poetry of their fathers over every part of our country.

However conspicuous may be the character, and however profound the learning of those men who assert, that the poems of Ossian are a forgery of modern times, but who confess themselves ignorant of the language in which these poems are handed down, I should reckon their ignorance of the matter in question a strong argument against our paying any deference to their opinions; seeing that there is not one Highlander, not one individual acquainted with our country and the Gaelic language, who has ever, for a moment, doubted the authenticity of these poems. There is none of us who has not heard frequent mention of the characters that occur in them. The farther back we trace the traditions, and the more accurately we enquire into the characters to which they allude, our conviction becomes the stronger that they can neither be fictitious nor imaginary.

It is no argument against the transmission of these ancient poems, that no man can now be found who is able to repeat the whole of them. There are few men who can repeat much of any poetry with accuracy; excepting such persons as make it their profession, and who earn their bread by their memories. It is enough that thousands can be still found in our Highlands and Isles who can recite many detached portions of them, according as they were pleased with particular passages, or as certain incidents recorded in them made a peculiar impression on their minds. How, if all were fictitious, could so many poems, named after Ossian, have existed for so many hundred years, and been still retained amongst the remostest islands, and the most sequestered corners of our Highlands.

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It is also well known, that learned men lived for many centuries in Icolmkill, from which learning was diffused over the Highlands; and it is reasonable to believe, that Ossian's poems were taken down in writing, like other parts of learning, and transmitted to their followers. But when Icolmkill was abandoned, and their books carried by them to Glasgow, the Gaelic was then in less esteem.

But the severest blow which our language has ever received, was the removal of the Royal Family to England, and the attendance of our men of rank and influence at Court; who were carrying back to their country the manners and language of England and of the Lowlands.

From that period, more frequent intercourse was obtained between the Highlanders and the people of the south. And Government exerted its utmost power for the destruction of the Gaelic language, and Highland manners, until by degrees the Highlanders were losing their respect and esteem for the manly and original language of their ancestors.

The case was different with the Irish Gaidhil, who had less connection with any other language; and therefore retained unadulterated the Old Gaelic hand-writing, after it ceased to be used in the Highlands.

It was customary with Highland gentlemen to write in Latin or Gaelic, before they became acquainted with the English tongue. This is well known to have been the case with Rory Mor, chief of the Mac Leods, who was the last chief among us who retained this practice.

It is an universal tradition and belief among us, in every part of the Highlands and Isles, that Ossian attained to a great age, and was blind in his latter years. Hence, we say of a man who has lost all his friends, and the companions of his youth, and who has the misfortune to survive them, " Tha é mur Oisein an' deigh na *Féinne*." He is like Ossian after the Féinc.

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These things (and a thousand other arguments that might be adduced,) prove incontestibly that Ossian lived; that he sung at a very early period; that many of his best poems are still preserved; and that no other bard has ever been compared with him by his countrymen.

WRITTEN at Tigheary, in North Uist, on the 12th of August, 1800, by Mr Edmund Mac Queen, Minister of the Gospel at Barra, as spoken in Gaelic by Hugh Macdonald. It was read aloud, word for word, at the house of Mr Mac Lean of Boreray, in presence of that gentleman; of Major Alexander Macdonald of Valay; of Captain Ewen Macdonald of Griminish; of Mr James Mac Queen, Missionary Minister, in Harris; and of Mr Roderick Mac Neil, younger of St Kilda: All of whom declared, that, although what was spoken by Hugh Macdonald, and thus written by Mr Mac Queen, is perfectly just and satisfactory, with regard to the authenticity of Ossian's poems; yet, infinitely more might be adduced to prove, that Ossian lived in times far beyond our modern period, and that his works secure to him exclusively the rank of the Chief of Caledonian Bards.

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No. III.

LETTER FROM MR. POPE.

From Mr Pope, Minister of Rea, in Caithness, dated 15th November, 1763, to the Reverend Mr Alexander Nicholson, Minister of Thurso.

Rev. and Dear Brother,

I have perused Dr Blair's letter to you, and could heartily wish that I could be of use in that affair in which he has taken such a concern. It was quite proper that he writ to the West Highlands, as these poems have been more carefully preserved in them, than with us in the North Highlands; and from both these quarters, he can get such evidences as are sufficient to convince people of candour: so that, if the literati in England will not be persuaded, they must wait till they see Ossian and his heroes in another world.

About 24 years ago, a gentleman living on Lord Reay's estate and I, entered into a project of collecting these old

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poems. We admired the purity of the stile; we were much charmed with the descriptions contained in them; and some of the sentiments were noble and sublime: to this end, we informed ourselves as to those old people that could repeat parts of them, and got their name, but we could not, from the best information, learn that there was any manuscript of them in this part of the kingdom. We indeed got a long list of poems, said to be composed by Ossian, and wrote some of them, viz. such as we found to answer our expectations; however that gentleman's death put an end to that scheme. When I heard of Mr Macpherson's translation, I was very curious to see it; but no copy came to this corner where I live till last summer, and at last I had my curiosity gratified. And the very first thing I did, was to examine if any part of these poems were in our collection; answerably I found that what is called Erragon in Mr Macpherson's Temora, is called Dibird fli, in the Gaelic in our Highlands. "Dibird fli gun drin finn, in Alvi ri linn no laoich", so the poem begins; which poem some old women repeat with great spirit. Also, Lathmon, we have fragments of it; and the poem which mentions the death of Oscar, is called with us, Ca Gaur. I followed the enquiry no farther then, nor indeed could I do it now to any purpose, unless I could collect all these fragments that old people still remember. This could be done at a small expence; and if Dr Blair would but propose it to some generous people, they would contribute ten pounds, which would execute the scheme, and these venerable productions would be preserved.

Many of them indeed are lost, partly owing to our clergy, who were declared enemies to these poems; so that the rising generation scarcely know any thing material of them. However, we have still some that are famous for repeating them, and these people never heard of Mac-

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pherson; and it is an absurdity to imagine, that Mr Macpherson caused any person teach these old people: on the contrary, they had these poems before Mr Macpherson was born; and if the literati would defray the expence, I could produce these old people, at least some of them, at London.

What has been a very great mean to preserve these poems among our Highlanders, is this, that the greatest number of them have particular tunes to which they are sung. The music is soft and simple; but when these airs are sung by two or three or more good voices, they are far from being disagreeable. The greatest number are called Duans, and resemble the Odes of Horace very much; others have different names, but the Duans are generally set to some tunes different from the rest.

There is an excellent poem, called Duan Dearmot, it is an elegy on the death of that warrior, and breathes the sublime very much. This poem is in esteem among a tribe of Campbells that live in this country, and would derive their pedigree from that hero, as other clans have chosen others of them for their patriarchs. There is an old fellow in this parish that very gravely takes off his bonnet as often as he sings Duan Dearmot: I was extremely fond to try if the case was so, and getting him to my house I gave him a bottle of ale, and begged the favour of him to sing Duan Dearmot; after some nicety, he told me that to oblige his parish minister he would do so, but to my surprise he took off his bonnet. I caused him stop, and would put on his bonnet; he made some excuses; however as soon as he began, he took off his bonnet, I rose and put it on; he took it off, I put it on. At last he was like to swear most horribly he would sing none, unless I allowed him to be uncovered; I gave him his freedom, and so he sung with great spirit. I then asked him the reason; he told me it

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was out of regard to the memory of that hero. I asked him if he thought that the spirit of that hero was present; he said not; but he thought it well became them who descended from him to honour his memory. I have thus entertained you with the best accounts I can give you at present of these warriors. If I had not been confined by the gout I could go more minutely to work; but if a little money was laid out in collecting what of these poems are still extant, it would make a larger volume than the Temora. If you think that it would be of any service to communicate a part of this letter to Dr Blair, you are very welcome; and if I can serve the Doctor in any thing further, I shall exert myself to serve him. I am,

Reverend and Dear Brother,

Your very humble servant,

ALEX. POPE.

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No. IV.

LETTERS TO MR. MACKENZIE, &c.

1. From Doctor HUGH BLAIR, Minister in Edinburgh, dated *Edinburgh*, 20th December 1797.

MY DEAR SIR,

As you desired to receive from me a particular account of the circumstances relating to the first discovery and publication of the poems of Ossian, in order to be communicated to the Highland Society, I shall endeavour, as far as my memory serves at this distance of time, to recollect the circumstances of that transaction in which I had a principal hand.

About the year 1759, Mr John Home being occasionally at Moffat, became for the first time acquainted with Mr James Macpherson, whom he met there, and who I think was at that time a tutor in the family of Mr Graham of Balgowan. In conversation with him, Mr Home hav-

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ing learned that he was possessed of some pieces of the oldest Highland poetry in the original, requested of him to show him a translation of one or two of those pieces, as a specimen. Two of these, which were afterwards published among the *Fragments*, were accordingly given to Mr Home, who admired them greatly, and at some distance of time showed them to me as valuable curiosities.

I being as much struck as Mr Home with the high spirit of poetry which breathed in them, presently made enquiry where Mr Macpherson was to be found; and having sent for him to come to me, had much conversation with him on the subject. When I learned that, besides the few pieces of that poetry which he had in his possession, greater and more considerable poems of the same strain were to be found in the Highlands, and were well known to the natives there, I urged him to translate the other pieces which he had, and bring them to me; promising that I should (take) care to circulate and bring them out to the public, by whom they well deserved to be known. He was extremely reluctant and averse to comply with my request, saying, that no translation of his could do justice to the spirit and force of the original; and that, besides injuring them by translation, he apprehended they would be very ill relished by the public as so very different from the strain of modern ideas, and of modern, connected, and polished poetry. It was not till after much and repeated importunity on my part, and representing to him the injustice he would do to his native country by keeping concealed those hidden treasures, which, I assured him, if brought forth, would serve to enrich the whole learned world, that I at length prevailed on him to translate, and bring to me, the several poetical pieces which he had in his possession. Them I published in 1760, under the title of *Fragments of Ancient Poetry, collected in the Highlands of Scotland*, and wrote the

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Preface which is prefixed to them, in consequence of the conversations I had held with Mr Macpherson.

The *Fragments*, when published, drew much attention; and excited, among all persons of taste and letters, an earnest desire to recover, if possible, all those considerable remains of Gaelic poetry which were said still to exist in the Highlands. When Mr Macpherson was spoken to on the subject, and urged by several persons to undertake the search, he showed extreme unwillingness to engage in it; representing both his diffidence of success and of public approbation, and the difficulty and expensiveness of such a search as was requisite through the remote Highlands. At length, to encourage him to undertake it, a meeting was brought together at a dinner, to which Mr Macpherson was invited, and which I had a chief hand in convocating, of many of the first persons of rank and taste in Edinburgh. The late Patrick Lord Elibank took a great lead at that meeting, together with Dr Robertson, Mr John Home, Sir Adam Fergusson, and many others whom I have now forgotten, who were all very zealous for forwarding the discovery proposed; and after much conversation with Mr Macpherson, it was agreed, that he should disengage himself from all other employment, and set out without delay on this poetical mission throughout the Highlands; and as his circumstances did not admit of his engaging in this at his own expence, that the whole expence he might undergo was to be defrayed by a collection raised from this meeting, with the aid of such other friends as we might chuse to apply to for that purpose; and we, in effect, engaged for his future success. Mr Robert Chalmers, if I remember right, was the person who undertook to collect the money, and to act as our treasurer. I remember well, that when the company were about to break up, and I was going away, Mr Macpherson followed me to the door, and told me that from the spirit of that meeting, he now for the

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first time entertained the hope that the undertaking to which I had so often prompted him would be attended with success; that hitherto he had imagined they were merely romantic ideas which I held out to him, but he now saw them likely to be realized, and should endeavour to acquit himself, so as to give satisfaction to all his friends.

Accordingly, he soon after set out on his mission through the Highlands; and during the time he was employed in it, he wrote to me and others of his friends, informing us what success he met with, in collecting from many different and remote parts all the remains he could find of ancient Gaelic poetry, either in writing or by oral tradition. When he returned to Edinburgh in winter, laden with his poetical treasures, he took lodgings in a house immediately below where I then lived, at the head of Blackfriar's Wynd, and busied himself in translating from the Gaelic into English. I saw him very frequently: he gave me accounts from time to time how he proceeded, and used frequently at dinner to read or repeat to me parts of what he had that day translated. Being myself entirely ignorant of the Gaelic language, I never examined or looked into his papers; but some gentlemen who knew that language, particularly Professor Adam Fergusson, told me that they did look into his papers, and saw some which appeared to them to be old manuscripts; and that, in comparing his version with the original, they found it exact and faithful, in any parts which they read.

After finishing his translation, he went to London and published it; and of his success there we all know. We all know likewise the doubts and scepticism concerning the genuineness of his work, which arose in England soon after the publication of it, and after my Dissertation upon it was also given to the world. These doubts his temper led him to disdain; perhaps to disdain too much. So far, however; he endeavoured to give satisfaction to the public,

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that for some months he left all the originals of his translation open to inspection and examination, in Becket the bookseller's shop, and intimated, by advertisement in the Newspapers, that he had done so. But when, after their being left there for a considerable time, he found that no one person had ever called to look at them, his disdain of public censure became still stronger. I urged him to write to the Highlands for authentic testimonies from some of those gentlemen from whom he received his materials. He utterly rejected this proposal, as implying a public distrust of his veracity; but at the same time consented to my making some enquiries of this nature, which he thought might come more suitably from me than from himself. Accordingly, from my zeal to throw every light upon the subject, I did write to a number of gentlemen in the Highlands, many of them of the most respectable rank and character, requesting information of what they knew respecting the originals of those poems of which Mr Macpherson had published a translation. The result of their testimony I gave in a printed Appendix to my Dissertation on the Poetry of Ossian; furnishing, I think, strong and irrefragable evidence in favour of the authenticity of the poems now given to the world as genuine productions of ancient Highland bards.

For my own part, from my perfect knowledge of all the circumstances of their discovery and translation, it was impossible for me to entertain any doubts on the subject of their authenticity. Of all the men I ever knew, Mr Macpherson was the most unlikely and unfit to contrive and carry on such an imposture, as some people in England ascribed to him. He had none of the versatility, the art and dissimulation, which such a character and such an undertaking would have required. He was proud, high-spirited, and disdainful; irritable to a degree, when his honour and veracity were impeached; not very apt, on any occa-

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sion, to listen to advice: and when unjust censures were thrown out against him, obstinate in his purpose of disregarding and contemning them, without the least concern of giving any satisfaction to those who opposed or cavilled at him.

Scepticism has indeed been entertained by many, how far his work, supposing it to be no imposture on the whole, could be relied upon as an accurate and faithful translation of his Gaelic originals. That in some of the longer works, he may have combined and brought together some pieces which he found scattered and broken, and that, in comparing the different copies which he frequently found of the same poem, either in manuscript or by rehearsal, he selected from them all such as he thought the best readings, I make no doubt, nor did he himself seem to disavow it. I also think it probable that he may have left out some rudenesses and extravagancies which he might occasionally find in the old Gaelic songs. But after all the enquiries I have been at pains to make, I can find no ground to suspect that his deviations from the original text were at all considerable, or his interpolations any more than what were simply necessary to connect together pieces of one whole which he found disjointed: That his work, as it stands, exhibits a genuine authentic view of ancient Gaelic poetry, I am as firmly persuaded, as I can be of any thing. It will, however, be a great satisfaction to the learned world, if that publication shall be completed, which Mr Macpherson had begun, of the whole Gaelic originals in their native state on one page, and a literal Latin translation on the opposite page. The idea which he once entertained, and of which he showed me a specimen, of printing the Gaelic in Greek characters, (to avoid the disputes about Gaelic orthography), I indeed strongly reprobated, as what would carry to the world a strange affected appear-

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ance, and prevent the originals from being legible by any but those who were accustomed to read Greek characters.

I have thus, my dear Sir, given you as full an account as I could of all that I remember concerning the discovery and publication of the poems of Ossian. I shall be happy if it give any satisfaction to that very respectable association of gentlemen to whom you wish it to be communicated, and to which I have myself the honour of belonging, in the station of an Honorary Member. I have perhaps been minute and tedious in my narration of particulars, but as I am now among the oldest persons alive who had any hand in that discovery and publication, I imagined that even some of the small circumstances I have mentioned, may be considered as of some weight. I confess I cannot avoid considering the discovery of the works of Ossian as an important æra in the annals of taste and literature; and the share which I have had, in contributing towards it, as a part of my life, by which I have deserved well both of this age and posterity. I have the honour to be, with much esteem and respect,

My Dear Sir,

Your most obedient, and
faithful humble servant,
HUGH BLAIR.

2. From Dr ADAM FERGUSSON, dated *Hallyards, near Peebles*, 26th March 1798.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have, within these few days, been honoured with a circular letter from the Committee of the Highland Society, with Queries relating to the poems of Ossian.

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In answer to the first query, the committee will please to know, that about the year 1740, I heard John Fleming, a taylor, who in the manner of the country, worked with his journeymen at my father's house, repeat, in a kind of chiming measure, heroic strains relating to an arrival or landing of an host and a subsequent battle, with a single combat of two chiefs. This I took down in writing, and kept for some time; but was not in possession of when Mr Macpherson's publications appeared. I had no doubt, however, in recognizing the same passage in the arrival of Swaran, and the single combat with Cuchullin, in Macpherson's translation of Fingal.

The few words I can recal, are, 1st, in relation to the hosts engaged:

" Iomma colan, iomma skia, iomma tria, is lurigh gharibh.

And in relation to the chiefs who grappled, and in whose struggle—

Bha cloghin agus talamh trom moscle fo bhonn an cos.

The Committee will be so good as excuse my spelling, and guess at the words as they best can. As John Fleming was then an oldish man, he is probably long since dead.

As to the second query—the Committee will please to know that I have, at different times, heard other scraps or fragments repeated; but the principal use I made of them was, to tell my friend and companion at College, Mr John Home, that there were such relicks of ancient poetry in the Highlands, and which led him to the inquiries which produced Mr Macpherson's communications.

The fragments I afterwards saw in Mr Macpherson's hands, by no means appeared of recent writing: the paper was much stained with smoke, and daubed with Scots snuff.

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To the third and fourth queries, I can say nothing, as I am not now in the neighbourhood to which they refer.

To the fifth, please to know that I have, very early in my life, and of course very long, heard of Fingal and his race of heroes, and of poetry on their subject, to be found some where in the Highlands. But as to my qualification to give evidence in this matter, the Committee will please to know, that the place of my nativity in Athole, is barely within the limits at which Gaelic begins to be the vulgar tongue, and where the mythology and tradition of the highland were likely to be more faint than in the interior parts. I am sensible that mere opinion must go for little in the midst of such evidence as the Committee are in search of. I cannot, however, entirely suppress my own, in addressing the committee of a society of which I have the honour to be a member, though prevented by my infirmities from taking any active part in the meritorious pursuits in which they are engaged. In the communications which Mr Macpherson at any time made to me, I was far from apprehending any imposture; but when the poems of Fingal and Temora appeared, I was inclined to think some pains must have been bestowed, and even liberties taken, in piecing together what was found in separate or broken fragments, with defects attending all such traditionary strains. What the collector had to do, or actually did, of this sort, it is impossible to know, if he himself has kept silence on the matter. May we not, without attempting to compare the subjects together, recollect a similar tradition relating to the scattered rhapsodies of Homer himself? and as the collector left no intimation of the pains or liberties he took, we embrace Homer, as we may now do Ossian, as the sole author of strains which bear his name. When I consider the late fashion of the times, respecting the contents of a language which is now thought so interesting, I am not surprised that the gleanings of Mac-

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person has left so little vestige behind. It was a language spoken in the cottage, but not in the parlour, or at the table of any gentleman. Its greatest elegancies were to be learned from herdsmen or deer-stealers. It was connected with disaffection, and proscribed by government. Schools were erected to supplant it, by teaching a different language. There were no books in it, but the manuals of religion, and these in so aukward and clumsy a spelling that few could read them. The fashionable world in the neighbourhood, as usual, derided the tone and accent of Highlanders, believing their own to be models of elegance and harmony. It was more genteel to be ignorant than knowing of what such a language contained; and it required all the genius, learning, and courage of James Macpherson, to perceive and affirm that the ancient strains of Gaelic poetry might compare with those of other nations more celebrated. If it should still remain a question with many, whether he collected or composed these strains I shall not be surprised; for I believe, that what he got in writing was unknown to those who gave it, and the merit of what was repeated scarcely felt. And, in short, that he himself at times was not averse to be thought the author of what became so much celebrated and admired throughout Europe.

In writing so much, and so little to the purpose of the Committee's letter, I trust to your usual favour and good nature in helping me to the proper excuses; and am, with the most sincere and perfect regard,

My Dear Sir,

Your most obedient, and
most humble servant,
ADAM FERGUSSON.

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3. From the Rev. Dr. CARLYLE, to WM M'DONALD, Esq. Secretary to the Highland Society, dated *Musselburgh*, 9th January 1802.

DEAR SIR,

An accident has brought to my remembrance an engagement I made to you many months ago, which I now shall endeavour to fulfil. The subject may not be important, but the age of the witness admonishes him to give his evidence without loss of time.

On the 2d day of October 1759, (I happen to know the date exactly), I came from the neighbourhood of Dumfries to Moffat in the morning, and finding John Home, the author of Douglas, there, I resolved to stay all day with him. In the course of our conversation, he told me that he had at last found what he had been long wishing for, a person who could make him acquainted with ancient Highland poetry, of which he had heard so much. This was James Macpherson, who was then tutor to Mr Graham of Balgowan, whom he had, with much solicitation and difficulty, prevailed with to translate some specimens of that poetry which he had by heart, but which, he said, he could not do justice to in an English translation. Mr Home had been highly delighted with them; and when he showed them to me, I was perfectly astonished at the poetical genius displayed in them. We agreed that it was a precious discovery, and that as soon as possible it should be published to the world. Mr Home carried the manuscript with him soon after to Edinburgh; and having shown it to Dr Blair, and other good judges, they were so much pleased that they encouraged Mr Macpherson to publish them without delay, which he did early in the year 1760, with the title of *Fragments of Ancient Poetry collected in the Highlands.*

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In a preface prefixed to this publication, Macpherson announced that there was a great deal of poetry of the same kind still to be found in the Highlands and Islands; and, in particular, that there was one work, of considerable length, which deserved to be stiled an Heroic Poem, which might be recovered and translated, if encouragement was given to such an undertaking. A subscription was immediately set about in the Parliament-House, and a sum sufficient to make such an important search was soon collected. Mr Macpherson made two journies through the Highlands, on one of which Mr Home accompanied him, and the result was, the publication at London first of Fingal, and then of Temora.

As, before this accidental meeting with Mr Home, Mr Macpherson had no idea of collecting and translating the works of Ossian, the fact remained on my mind as a strong ground-work for the evidence of the authenticity of Ossian, when both the internal and external evidence was so ably scrutinized by the late Dr Blair. Upon this ground, I remain fully convinced that Macpherson did not, and could not, with all his ability, which was great, fabricate the poems; though I am ready to admit, that after collecting all the scattered fragments, he tied them together in form of heroic poems, as Homer is said to have done when he collected the songs of the bards of Greece.

Macpherson however had laid himself too much open to the critics by attempting, in his Dissertations on Fingal, to unite two things that must ever remain separate, viz. poetical fiction and historical truth, which I observe has opened a late violent attack on him, by a writer of history, which I have little doubt will prove as ineffectual to overthrow the authenticity of Ossian, as any of the former attacks.

I have only to add, that during my intimacy with Macpherson for two winters in London, in 1769 and 70, when

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I saw him daily, and lived in intimacy with him for four months in each of those seasons, I never was able to discover, in his most unguarded moments, that he was any other than the collector and translator of the works of Ossian, or assumed any other merit than might be derived from thence. But I have heard him express the greatest contempt and disdain for those who thought him the fabricator of them. If there was any person who asserted that Macpherson had owned it to himself, even that would not shake my faith; for I knew him to be of a temper, when he was teased and fretted, to carry his indignation that far. This is all I have to say on the subject. If you think it of importance to establish your proof, you will communicate it to the Society; if not, you will be so good as commit it to the flames. I have the honour to be,

Dear Sir,

With respect, yours, &c.

ALEX. CARLYLE.

4. NOTE from Mr HOME.

In the summer of the year 1758 or 1759, Mr Home met Mr James Macpherson and his pupil (Graham of Balgowan) at Moffat. Some years before he saw Mr Macpherson, Professor Fergusson, who understood Gaelic, had told Mr Home that there were, in the Highlands, some remains of ancient poetry in the Gnelic language, and mentioned one poem which he had heard repeated, and thought very beautiful. Conversing with Mr Macpherson, Mr Home found that he was an exceeding good classical scholar; and was not a little pleased that he had met with one who was a native of the remote Highlands, and likely to give him some information concerning the ancient poetry of his country. Accordingly, when Mr Macpherson was que-

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stioned on that subject, he said that he had in his possession several pieces of antient poetry. When Mr Home desired to see them, Mr Macpherson asked if he understood the Gaelic? "Not one word." "Then, how can I show you them?" "Very easily," said Mr Home; "translate one of the poems which you think a good one, and I imagine that I shall be able to form some opinion of the genius and character of the Gaelic poetry." Mr Macpherson declined the task, saying, that his translation would give a very imperfect idea of the original. Mr Home, with some difficulty, persuaded him to try, and in a day or two he brought him the poem on the death of Oscar; with which Mr Home was so much pleased, that in a few days two or three more were brought him, which Mr Home carried to Edinburgh, and shewed them to Dr Blair, Dr Fergusson, Dr Robertson, and Lord Elibank, who were no less pleased with them than he had been. In the course of the year, Mr Home carried the translations which Mr Macpherson had given him to London, where they were equally admired.

If Mr Home had been possessed of the second sight, and could have foreseen that the authenticity of the poems of Ossian would have ever been called in question, he might certainly have preserved a more distinct and accurate account of the manner in which they were brought to light. It is perhaps unnecessary to mention a circumstance which is probably known to many gentlemen of the Highland Society. Mr Home, in travelling through the Highlands, has met with several common people who repeated to him many hundred lines of the rhymes, as they called them. Mr Home having usually with him one or more who understood the Gaelic language, made the rhymes be repeated again, which the person who understood both languages translated, so as to leave no room to doubt that the tales and songs, sung by the boatmen and herds in the Highlands, are the poems of Ossian.

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No. V.

LETTERS TO MR. MACKENZIE.

1. From Doctor JOHN SMITH, dated *Campbelton*, 16th September 1797.

SIR,

I HAD the honour of your letter of the 31st ult. with the printed queries circulated by the Highland Society of Scotland relative to Ossian's poems. On the subject of these queries, I advanced all I had to say long ago; and if any thing fell in my way since, *pro* or *con*, it was allowed to pass unnoticed, as I never intended to bestow any further thoughts upon the matter. If, however, upon recollection, any thing new, or more explicit, shall occur to my memory, I shall state it; but cannot help thinking, with all due deference to better judges, that the investigation set on foot by the Society, would do better after the poems should have been first published, and allowed to speak, at least in part, for themselves.

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The most formidable objections that have been urged against the authenticity of Ossian's poems, are those that are founded, or pretended to be founded, on history; so that, besides getting answers to the printed queries, even if these should be satisfactory, it would be necessary to employ considerable historical research, in order to answer such objections. You mention one made by Gibbon. Whether he may be right or wrong in his assertion, (for his assertions are not always to be trusted,) I have no opportunity of examining: at any rate, I think Ossian is clear of this objection; for the Gaelic word is obviously an epithet, (signifying *fierce-eye*,) and might be as applicable to any other as to the emperor Caracalla. If Mr M'— in applying this epithet to Caracalla, should be found in a mistake, as I apprehend he is in this, and in one or two similar cases; his mistakes, in my opinion, make rather for than against the authenticity of the poems, as a forger would not, by his own unnecessary commentaries or conjectures, abstract from the credit of his text.

Fingal, according to the Irish histories, died in the year	283
Caracalla's expedition against the Caledonians happened in	211
	72
Fingal could hardly have been intrusted with leading the Caledonians on so important an expedition under the age of	25
So that, at this rate, he must have lived to the age of	97

Which does not appear credible, even from many passages of Ossian: so that Mr M'— may have been mistaken in applying the above epithet to Caracalla; and if he was, the objection falls to the ground.

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The refinement of manners in Ossian's poems is, as you observe, a well known objection against this authenticity. But let our history be investigated, and I am satisfied this objection will be done away. What if we shall produce passages purely historical, and undeniably more than 1000 years old, that are no less refined and delicate? Take the first instance that occurs to my memory, and I think it would not disgrace even the *man of feeling* in the 18th century:—"See that crane coming towards our shore, in its flight over from Ireland. It is quite spent, and obliged to alight in the water. Run, take up the poor bird, bring it to the house, feed it, and take care of it for three days, till it be sufficiently refreshed, and able to return to its native land; and for thy kindness and hospitality, my son, God will bless thee." I quote from memory, and do not pretend to have the exact rendering of the *words*, but I am sure I have the exact rendering of the *sentiment*. Investigate our history, and it will give credibility to our poetry, in more respects than in delicacy of sentiment. We have but lately emerged from a long night of barbarism; but previous to that night, there existed, as there is much reason to believe, a period of considerable light and refinement. I have made some efforts, not as yet very successfully, to penetrate the darkness in which Highland history is involved. I hope more will be done by those who have more opportunity; and that the Highland Society will attend to the ancient history, as well as to the ancient poetry, of the Highlands. I am, with respect and esteem,

Sir,

Your most humble servant,

JOHN SMITH.

I expect soon a transcript of a large and very ancient Gaelic MS. in which I am told there are "many interesting particulars respecting the government, arts, arms, war-

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fare, and dress of our remote ancestors," and if it contains any thing on the subject of your queries, I shall take care to note it down. This MS. was found in Ireland; but my correspondent, who is a competent judge, thinks it is Scotch and not Irish, and the composition of the fifth or sixth century. I have reason to think that some ancient MSS. might still be found in the Highlands, if a proper search should be made for them. I have seen some myself, which was part of a large treasure left by a gentleman who died 30 or 40 years ago. Much of it was scattered before I saw it, and more of it I suppose since, after a lapse of twenty years.

2. From Doctor JOHN SMITH, dated *Edinburgh*, 31st January 1798.

SIR,

When I was favoured with your letter, accompanied with the printed queries relative to Ossian's poems, I thought it enough to refer you to what I had formerly published on that subject. But since you wish me to be more particular, I shall now write you at greater length, although I do not suppose that any thing I have to say will serve to convince those who are determined not to believe; nor do I apprehend the matter to be of very great importance. I can only say that, from my earliest years, I was accustomed to hear many of the poems of Ossian, and many tales respecting Fingal and his heroes. In the parish of Glenurchay, in which I was born, and lived till the age of 17, there were many at that time who could repeat a number of Ossian's poems, and there was particularly an old man called Doncha (rioch) Macnicol, who was noted for reciting the greatest store of them. That any of them had been translated, I did not know, till I

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became a student in philosophy, when, in the year 1760 or 1767, I read Mr Macpherson's translation, with which, beautiful as it is, I was by no means so much charmed as I had been with the oral recitation of such as I had heard of the poems in the original language. The elegance of the modern dress did not therefore, in my opinion, compensate for the loss of the venerable and ancient garb. In reading the translation, I recognized a number of poems, episodes, and passages, which were familiar to me. Some of the poems, and parts of poems, were, however, new to me; and others which I knew, and supposed to have considerable merit, I desiderated. Of a number of these last, I procured several editions some years afterwards; but did not trouble myself or others with collecting those which had been already translated, as it was then expected that Mr Macpherson himself would soon publish them. When this however became doubtful, I remember to have formed the design of collecting as many as I could of his originals, which at that time would not be a few: but finding there was no encouragement to be expected for such a work, and that those which I had already collected would not defray their own expence, nor have been ever published had it not been for the liberal support and patronage of the Highland Society of London, I gave up the pursuit of Gaelic poetry; about which I became so careless, that I never took the trouble of transcribing or preserving several pieces that had fallen into my possession. Some I lost, some I gave away, and some still meet me in the bosom of this or the other book. Had I had the *second sight* to foresee that such things would one day be in request, I might have now had many. In the original poems and translations which I had published, I had occasion to introduce several passages of Mr Macpherson's originals into the notes; for, without searching for them, I had got considerable portions of several of those poems

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that were then recited in the higher parts of Argyllshire; as were the poem of Darthula, perhaps the most beautiful in the collection, called in Gaelic by the name of *Clann Usnothain*, (the children of Usnoth); a part of the first book of Temora, known by the title of *Bàs Oscair* (the death of Oscar), one of the tenderest pieces in the book; and the description of Cuchullin's car and horses, one of the most improbable. In that part of the country, many will be found who remember to have heard these often recited, and perhaps some who can still recite a part of them: although within these last fifty years the manners of the Highlanders are totally changed, and the songs and tales of their fathers neglected and almost forgotten.

With regard to the degree of liberty used by Mr Macpherson in his translation, it is a point on which it is difficult to decide. With better materials, and superior talents, his execution was far beyond any thing I could pretend to; but I am convinced, from experience, that he must have followed the same process. He must have not only used a discretionary power, or critical acumen, in combining and arranging the scattered parts of poems (as was done by those who collected the books of Homer), but he must have also used his judgment in comparing one edition with another, selecting or rejecting words, lines, and stanzas, now from one and then from another, in order to make one correct edition from which he would make his translation. He may have sometimes added here and there a connecting line or sentence, or may have perhaps cast one away, without deviating in the main from the spirit, sense, and sentiment of his author: but the exact degree of liberty which he took can hardly be ascertained. Different editions of the same poem were, as you may well suppose, very widely different, from their having been recited for ages by different persons and in different places; so that, without having the translator's corrected

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edition of the original, the translation may not exactly correspond with any single edition that may now be found. From having compared the original and translation of a few passages and parts of poems many years ago, the impression that remains upon my mind is, that the liberty taken was no more than I thought allowable; and I am persuaded, that it would have appeared to be still less if I had the translator's own edition.

In what I have said, I wish to be understood as speaking only of the first volume published by Mr Macpherson, of which a number of the poems, episodes, and incidents were known to me in the original: and as some of these were among the most beautiful in the collection, I can easily give the poet credit for other passages of less note connected with them, which I may not have heard. The second volume may possibly be equally authentic with the first; but I do not feel myself authorized to speak of it in the same terms, as I do not remember to have heard any of it in the original, except what relates to the death of Oscar. I thought, too, when I read it, which was a long time ago, that the stile of some parts of it was more curt, abrupt, and affected, than the rest of the poetry of Ossian. I should therefore suspect, that if the translator used too much liberty in any part of his work, it was in this; in which he seems at least to have condemned and fettered the sense, more than perhaps the genius of the original would well bear. I do not recollect whether this observation may be justified by the specimen of the original which I had seen, published with the first edition; but I recollect, that upon comparing that specimen with the translation, I observed several words of which (as I thought) the able translator inadvertently mistook the meaning, which could not well be supposed to have been the case, if, as some alledged, any part of it was of his own composition. As Mr M. collected most of his originals in the North High-

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lands, it is probable he may have found there the greater part of the 2d Vol. although we had but little of it in the West; at least so far as I had access to know, for I am far from thinking that I heard the whole of what was known to my countrymen, as I removed early from those higher parts in which those poems were more generally known and recited. In a conversation which I had lately on this subject with Dr Fraser, minister of Inveraray, he mentioned a James Nicholson, sometime ago minster in Sky, whom he had often heard for hours together repeating some of Ossian's poems, and recited to me a few of those verses which he still remembered. They were part of the description of the horses in Cuchullin's car, and contained one or two epithets which neither he nor I could understand. I have since looked at Mr M.'s translation of this passage, and observed that these words were passed over in silence, as probably he did not know the meaning of them either. I think Dr Fraser said the present minister of Thurso was nephew to this Mr Nicholson. Perhaps he may know, whether his uncle left any of these poems in writing, which I fear he did not, as the difficulty of the Gaelic orthography deterred even scholars from attempting to write it. I think there is a specimen or two, if I remember right, of Ossian's poetry published in Mr Shaw's grammar, and several in Gillies's collection, but, as I observed before, little can be made of one edition, without others to correct it. One or two other poems, ascribed to Ossian, have been also published some years ago in the Gentleman's Magazine, by a Mr Hill, an English gentleman, who had picked them up in an excursion through the Highlands. One of these, which is a Dialogue between St Patrick and Ossian, I often heard, and thought it an aukward but ancient attempt to imitate the Celtic bard, by some person who did not advert to the anachronism. But I had occasion to observe lately, in Colgan, an Irish

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author who wrote near the beginning of last century, that St Patrick had actually a convert, a disciple of this name, who was afterwards dignified with the title of St Ossin, or Ossian, who is no doubt the speaker in this poem; which Colgan, who mentions it, observes, could not be ascribed to the son of Fingal, who lived long before the time of St Patrick, or, as he says, in the reign of king Cormac. The same author, in a note to a passage in which mention is made of Fingal (or Finnius filius Cubhalli), in one of the lives of St Columba, says he was much celebrated in poems and tales *inter suos*; by which, I suppose he means that he belonged to this country, and not to Ireland, as in that case he would have said *inter nos trates*. But as it is not your object at present to ascertain the time and place, but only the poetry of Ossian, I will not enter into any historical, chronological, or topographical disquisition, which would exceed the ordinary bounds of a letter, already sufficiently long. Such a disquisition, however, would be very satisfying, and should make a part of your plan, as it would not only add to the weight of other evidence, but go a great length to account for the peculiar manners of the poetry, and go far to remove some of the strongest objections that have been made to the authenticity of Ossian. Some of these objections have been occasioned by Mr M.'s notes, and are not chargeable on the poet; such as that in which he supposes Ossian's epithet of *Caraciul* or *Gargbuil*, (fierce-eyed) to be a proper name, and to mean Caracalla. I suspect also, that although Lochlan (as appears from several passages of a very ancient Irish or Gaelic author now before me) was of old a general name with us for all Germany as well as Scandinavia, Mr M. may have sometimes implicitly used it (as I did myself,) in conformity to oral recitation, without attending always to the circumstances of the case. Our later intercourse with the Danes occasioned Lochlan to be frequent-

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ly introduced into some poems and tales, in which it ought to have no place. I remember, for instance, to have heard 30 years ago, a long tale (recited by one M'Phail, a taylor in Lorn), of which the hero was Conal Gulbann mac righ Lochlann, and if I had then translated it, I would have called him, as I heard him called, son of the king of Lochlin. But this Conal Gulbann appears from Irish history to have belonged not to Scandinavia, but to Loigheann (*Lagenia*) in Ireland. Thus, some of Mr M.'s inadvertencies, in which he plainly appears to have followed the oral recitation, without a due investigation into history, may tend to illustrate the authencity of his poems. So may also the description of some scenes, and names of places, of the existence of which he had no opportunity of having any knowledge; as I had formerly occasion to show in one or two instances. Proverbial expressions, names of places, called time out of mind after some of Ossian's heroes, allusions to their customs and manners, with the remains of these poems being still found in Ireland (as well as in the Highlands of Scotland, as testified by Mr Walker in his History of the Irish bards), and the notices occasionally to be met with in old Scottish and Irish writers on this subject, would also tend to throw much light upon your enquiry. The institution of bards, retained in the families of several chieftains till the present century, will account for the preservation of these poems by oral tradition; as will also the manners of the people, whose winter-evening entertainment was, till very lately, the repetition of poems, tales, and songs. The language of these poems being still intelligible, excepting some words, may be accounted for, from having been constantly repeated and made familiar, and from the Highlanders having always remained a separate people, secluded from the rest of the world by their peculiar language, customs, and manners. So the wild Arabs retain, I believe, to this day,

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their ancient language, as well as their ancient dress and manners. A life of St Patrick, written in the 6th century, in Irish verse, is still intelligible to an Irishman; and a poem of near 100 verses, of which I have a copy, and which was composed about the same time by St Columba, though for ages past little known or repeated, will be understood, except a few words, by an ordinary Highlander. These, and the like arguments, ought to be stated and illustrated at large; I only pretend to offer a few hints as they occur to me *currente calamo*. The general authenticity of the poems, I have no doubt you will be able sufficiently to establish, although not of every poem taken individually. The enquiry, in order to accomplish this, was at least 30 years too late of being set on foot: but better now than never. I am sure you will not only forgive, but thank me for putting an end now to this long and unimportant letter; and therefore I only add, that I am, with respect and regard,

Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

JOHN SMITH.

3. From Doctor JOHN SMITH, dated *Campbelton*, 12th April 1798.

DEAR SIR,

When I had the pleasure of seeing you at Edinburgh, you put into my hands a parcel of ancient Gaelic poems, transmitted to you by Mr M'Lagan, desiring I might give you a literal version of a few passages of them, in order to compare it with the translation of Mr Macpherson. With this view I took down a few paragraphs which, contrary to my intention, I omitted to re-

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turn to you with such a version as you wanted, before I left town, for which the best apology I can make is, to send them now.

The following lines are taken from the poem entitled, "*Catb Fhinn agus Mbanois*; from the recitation of Calum an Raodhair."

ORIGINAL.

Chuir sinn Deo-greine ri crann,
Bratach Fhinn bu ghairge treis,
Lomlan do chlochaibh an òir,
'S ann leinne bu mhor a neas.
Iomadh claidheamh dorn-chrann oirn,
Iomadh sròl ga chur ri crann,
An cath mhic Cumhail nam fleadh
'S bu lionmhor sleagh os ar ceann.

LITERAL VERSION.

We set the sun-beam to the pole,
The standard of Fingal of stoutest might,
Full-studded with stones in gold;
With us it was held in high respect.
Many were our swords with fist-guards.
Many the standards reared on poles,
In the battle of the son of Cumhal of feasts,
And many the spears above our heads.

After observing that the different editions of all these poems differ greatly from each other, (as may well be supposed, when they were left to the mercy of oral recitation) and that it is hardly fair to judge of Mr M.'s translation without having his own edition, I shall here subjoin his version of this passage, as it is in Fingal, b. iv. p. 57, of the first 4to edition.

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" We reared the sun-beam of battle; the standard of the king. Each hero's soul exulted with joy, as, waving, it flew in the wind. It was studded with gold above, as the blue wide shell of the mighty sky. Each hero had his standard too; and each his gloomy men."

The following is another passage from the same poem:

ORIGINAL.

Seachd altrumain an lochain Lain,
'S e labhair Goll gun fhàs cheilg
Ge lionmhor acasan an sluagh,
Diongaidh mis am buaidh san leirg,
Thuirt an t Oscar bu mhor brìgh,
Leig mise gu righ Innse tore,
Ceann a dhà chomhairlich dheug
Leig fam chomhair fein an cosg.
Labhair e Conall a rìs
Diongamsa righ Innse-con,
Is cinn a shea-comhalta deug,
No bidh mi fein air an son.
Iarla Mughan, ge mor a ghlonn,
Labhair Diarmad dona gun on,
Coisgidh mi sud d'ar Feinn,
No tuitidh mi fein air a shon.
'Se feimeas a ghabh i fein,
Ge d' tha mi gun trein 'a nochd,
Righ Tearmunn nan comhrag teann,
Gu sgarainn a cheann o chorp.
Beiribh beannachd, beiribh buaidh,
Arsa Mac Cumhail nan gruaidh dearg,
Manus Mac Garaidh nan sluagh,
Coisgear leamsa, ge mor fhearg.

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LITERAL VERSION.

The seven chiefs bred at the lake of Lan,
Said Gaul, without hollow guile,
Though numerous with them their hosts,
I will match, and be victorious on the extended heath.
Said Oscar, great in might,
Let me to the king of Inistore,
At the head of the twelve chiefs of his council, (1)
Leave to me the subduing of them.
Then spoke Connal next,
Let me be match for the king of Inniscon,
And for the sixteen heads fostered along with him: (2)
Or I myself will fall in their stead.
The chief of Mugan, (3) though great his boasting,
Said brown-haired Dermid, without rage,
I will subdue for Fingal's heroes,
Or I will fall myself in his place.
It was the service chosen by myself,
Though I am without strength this night,
The king of Terman of battles fierce
His head to sever from his body.
Be ye blest, be ye victorious,
Said Fingal of the ruddy cheeks,
Manus, son of Gara, (4) of the hosts, (5)
Shall be subdued by me, though great his rage.

Mr M.'s version of this passage, or of what this passage was in his edition, is as follows, Fingal, b. iv. p. 58.—

" Mine, said Gaul, be the seven chiefs that came from Lano's lake. Let Inistore's dark king, said Oscar, come to the sword of Ossian's son. To mine, the king of Iniscon, said Connal, heart of steel! Or Madan's chief, or I, said the brown-haired Dermid, shall sleep on clay-cold earth. My choice, though now so weak and dark, was

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Terman's battling king; I promised with my hand to win the hero's dark-brown shield. Blest and victorious be my chiefs, said Fingal of the mildest look; Swaran, king of roaring waves, thou art the choice of Fingal."

NOTE 1. *The twelve chiefs of his council.*—This alludes to the northern custom of the king's having 12 counsellors, chosen from his principal people, who sat with him to decide on every matter of moment. This custom was introduced by the Norwegians long afterwards into the Hebrides, where it continued to a late period. The king, as chief judge, had the 13th of the matter in dispute for his trouble.

2. *Sixteen foster'd along with him*—This alludes to another custom which prevailed of old, and which continued till very lately in the Highlands. A number of youths proportioned to the rank of the chieftains, or commonly 15, were brought up in his family along with his son, in order to make them the more attached to his person ever after.

3. *Mughan* and *Mudhan*, are pronounced in the same way in Gaelic, the *dh* and *ugh* being mute; and both Mr M'L. and Mr M. writing from oral recitation, each followed his own fancy, and wrote it differently.

4. Nothing can show the difference of editions more, than that even the names of the principal characters in the poems are not always the same.

5. For *sluagh* hosts, Mr M.'s edition was *stuagh*, roaring waves. I could thus account for many variations.

As my hand is in, I will give you another passage, describing the combat of the two kings.

ORIGINAL.

Thachair Mac Cumhail nan cuach,
Is Manus nan ruag aigh

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R'a cheile an tuiteam an t sluaigh,
'S ann leinne gum bu chruaidh an dàil.
Gum be sud an tuirleam teann,
Mar ghreann a bheireadh dà ord,
Cath fuileach an dà righ,
Gum bu ghuineach brìgh an colg.
Air briseadh don sgiathan dearg,
Air eiridh dhoibh fearg is fraoch,
Thilg iad am buill air làr,
'S thug iad spairn an da laoch.
Nuair a thoisich stù nan triath,
'S ann leinne gum bu chian an clos,
Bha clachan is talamh trom,
A mosgladh fo spoirn an cos.
Thog Mac Cumhail an àigh,
Righ Lochlan gu hard na uchd,
'S bhuail e a dhruim ri làr
Am builsgean traigh * Innse-tore.
Leagadh righ Lochlan an àigh,
Am fianuis chàich air an fhraoch,
Airsan ge nach b' onoir righ,
Chuireadh ceangal nan tri chaol.

LITERAL VERSION.

There met the son of Cumhal of shells
And Manos of victorious pursuits
Together, amidst the falling of their people;
And to us terrible was their meeting.
That was the contest severe,
Like the clanging sound of two hammers,
Was the bloody battle of the two kings,
And horrid the rage of their aspect.
Having broken their red shields,
Their rage and fury being increased,

* Read ràigh.

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They flung their weapons on the ground,
And in each other grasp the two heroes.
When thus began the struggle of the chiefs,
It was to us a weariness to be at rest;
The stones and the heavy earth
Awoke under the straining of their feet.
The victorious son of Cumhal lifted up
The king of Lochlin high on his breast,
And struck his back down to the ground,
In the midst of the ranks of Innistore.
Thus fell the king of Lochlin the brave,
In presence of all on the heath,
And on him, though no honour to a king,
Was put the tie of the three smalls, (*i. e.* his neck, hands, and feet were bound.)

Mr M.'s translation of the edition which he had of this passage, is as follows: Fingal, b. v. p. 62.

"The heroes met in the midst of their falling people. There was the clang of arms! there every blow, like the hundred hammers of the furnace! Terrible is the battle of the kings, and horrid the look of their eyes, Their dark-brown shields are cleft in twain; and their steel flies, broken, from their helmets. They fling their weapons down. Each rushes to his hero's grasp. Their sinewy arms bind round each other: they turn from side to side, and strain and stretch their large spreading limbs below. But when the pride of their strength arose, they shook the hills with their heels; rocks tumble from their places on high; the green-headed bushes are overturned. At length, the strength of Swaran fell; and the king of groves is bound."

From the above specimens, taken from a very incorrect and single edition of this poem, you may, I think, form a pretty favourable idea of the faithfulness of Mr M.'s

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translation, when he had probably several editions of which the one would enable him to correct or amend the other. I could, in many instances, account for the difference by the change of a single letter in words of a similar sound; although I am far from thinking, that the translator attended much to a scrupulous exactness in his version. If my letter had not been already long, and my sheet near full, I would have given you a version of a few passages of one or two more of the poems, particularly of the *Battle of Lora*, although the edition of it too is very imperfect. I once had, and think I still have, an edition of that poem, which I suppose is more correct. I wonder Mr M'L. left out, as he says he did, about a dozen of stanzas, describing the curious presents offered to Erragon, as they are translated by Mr M. When I can lay my hand on my copy, I may perhaps send you them, with a literal version. I observed one circumstance in the edition you have, imperfect as it is, which I do not recollect to have noticed before. The poet, after having confessed that half his people fell in that battle, says, that if he were to *swear by the sun*, he could not say that above a third of them escaped. This looks as if the sun was the object of his reverence or worship.

I was much disappointed in reading the poem, entitled *Clann Uilsneachain*, (or Clann Usnothain) which I thought, from the title, might be the original of Darthula; but which is so far short of it, in point of incident and imagery, that I do not think it is so much as a bad edition of a poem which I heard long ago repeated under the name of *Clann Usnothain*, and of which I have since heard good judges speak in high terms, as the original of Darthula. The *first* part of the poem in your posession, which seems to have little or no connection with the *second*, is evidently a composition of the 8th

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century; as Nial Frasach, one of the characters introduced in it, was an Irish king, who abdicated his throne, and retired to the monastery of Icolumkill, where he died in 765. Mr M. however seems to have either seen or heard of this poem, as he observes in a note that the traditionary account of Darthula's death was, that she ended her days by suicide; which is the account given of *Deardruin* in this poem, although the poet glosses it over very gently. He speaks of her borrowing a knife, and afterwards we find her dead, on the body of Nathos. The concluding verses, which mention two yews as growing from their graves, and entwining their branches on high, make a part, if I remember rightly, of some other of Mr M.'s translations, but I do not recollect which. I remain, with esteem,

Dear Sir,

Your most humble servant,

JOHN SMITH.

3. From Doctor JOHN SMITH, dated *Campbelton*, 21st June 1802.

SIR,

It was only last night that I had the pleasure of your letter of the 11th. It is now two or three and twenty years since I published the translations you mention; and as I had taken no pains to keep either letters, copies, or memorandums of them, nor had any occasion, except what you gave me, of saying almost any thing about them, my recollection does not warrant me now to add any thing more precise to the general account which I then gave of them. Since that time, indeed, I do not think that I ever read a single page of them. Last winter I accidentally found, in an old book which I had

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not opened for many years, a sheet of an old Gaelic poem, and mentioned to a brother of mine, who was with me at the time, that I had not the least recollection how I came by it, upon which he put me in mind that I had told him when he had seen it, with some others, (above twenty years ago,) they had been got, (together with a collection of Proverbs sent to Mr Macintosh,) from Captain Alexander Campbell, then chamberlain of Kintyre, who had them from one William Mac Murchy, a musician, and an amateur of ancient poetry. This circumstance I mention, to shew you how little I troubled my memory with any particulars relative to these poems. One circumstance, however, I remember well, that a man who had given me the use of a parcel of poems, without any restriction, had long threatened a prosecution for publishing what he called translations of his collection of poems, and alledged he had a claim to a share of the profits. I believe however, upon enquiry, that he understood the profits were only a serious loss, as I had been persuaded to run shares with a bookseller in the publication, which to me turned out so bad a concern (when my income was but thirty pounds a year,) that I could never since think of Gaelic poetry with pleasure or with patience, except to wish it had been dead before I was born. The circumstance I have just mentioned, may be construed in favour of the authenticity of these poems; but on the other side, I have to mention that, in my observing the beauty of one or two passages in one of those poems, (I forget which) the person who gave it me as an ancient poem, said, *these were of his own composition.* This assertion, I placed then to the account of his vanity; but I think *it right to state it to you as I had it, and leave you to think of it what you please.* I feel no interest in the question, in its issue, or in the fate of the poetry. Indeed, I know little of what has been said, *pro* or *con*, on the subject for these many years, having neither the opportunity

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nor the desire to enquire into the matter. But I consider the combatants in the dispute in the same light with the two knights who fought about the shield hung between them; the one maintaining it was white, the other it was black, while each looked only on the side that was next him; so that both were partly in the right, and partly in the wrong. That Fingal fought, and that Ossian sung, cannot be doubted. That the poems of Ossian extended their fame for ages over Britain and Ireland, is also clear from Barbour, Cambden, Colgan, and many other old writers of the three kingdoms. That at least the stamina, the bones, sinews, and strength, of a great part of the poems now ascribed to him are ancient, may I think be maintained on many good grounds. But that some things modern may have been superinduced, will, if not allowed, be at least believed on grounds of much probability: and to separate precisely the one from the other, is more than the translator himself, were he alive, could now do, if he had not begun to do so from the beginning. Even then he might not be sure of the genuineness of every poem or passage given him as ancient, supposing his own invention were out of the question. What cannot therefore be determined otherwise, must in the end be compromised. I suspect the originals, if published, (as I imagine they are not likely to be,) were never intended to decide the question about their authenticity, but perhaps to render it problematical or suspicious.

I am sorry I have not beside me a copy of my translations to exercise my recollection, though probably in vain, on the passage to which you refer. I some time ago used a copy I had in papering a dark closet that had not been lathed, in order to derive some small benefit from what had cost me so much: I question if any o-

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ther copy of the book has ever done so much service. I admire your zeal in a matter to which only your zeal could give much importance. But nothing would be done to purpose, if we did not attach importance to it, while we are engaged, as, no doubt, I did, at the time, to the translating of Gaelic poems. I am, with respect and regard,

Dear Sir,

Your most humble servant,

JOHN SMITH.

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No. VI.

MALCOLM MACPHERSON's AFFIDAVIT.

At SCALPA, *Sept.* 5, 1800.

MALCOLM MACPHERSON, residenter in the parish of Portree, Isle of Sky, and county of Inverness, a married man, aged sixty-six years and upwards, and son of Dougald Macpherson, late tenant in Beenfuter in Troternish, (who was in his time an eminent Highland bard,) being called upon, appeared before us, two of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace for this county, and made the following declaration upon oath.—

That he had a brother called Alexander, by profession a smith, who died in February one thousand seven hundred and eighty, and who could read and write both English and Gaelic: That he was noted in the country for his knowledge of the poems of Ossian, of which he, the declarant, heard him repeat many: That the declarant was informed by his said brother, and he heard also from

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others, that when the late Mr James Macpherson from Badenoch was in this country, collecting the poems of Ossian, he employed himself four days and four nights at Portree, in taking down a variety of them from the recitation of the declarant's said brother.

That the said declarant farther declares, that his said brother had a Gaelic manuscript in quarto, and about an inch and quarter in thickness; that he procured the said book at Lochcarron, while an apprentice there: that he heard his said brother almost daily repeat the poems contained in the said manuscript, which wholly regarded the Fions or Fingalians: That Mr James Macdonald, then landlord of Portree, having informed Mr Macpherson that the declarant's brother had such a manuscript in his possession, Mr Macpherson requested to see it. Farther declares, That before Mr Macpherson parted with the declarant's brother, the said Mr Macpherson observed that, as the declarant's brother could repeat the whole of the poems contained in the manuscript, he would oblige him if he would give him the said manuscript, for which he might expect his friendship and future reward: That his said brother informed the declarant he had accordingly given the said manuscript to Mr Macpherson, who carried it with him; since which time, the declarant never heard of it. Farther declares, That he heard his father often reprimand his brother for answering the frequent calls upon him to the house of Portree, to repeat the poems of Ossian to gentlemen who had a taste for that poetry; and that he recollects giving him a very severe reprimand for spending so much time with Mr Macpherson; that his brother pled, in excuse, that he found Mr Macpherson so very kind, and being a name-sake, that he could not resist his solicitations.

Declares, That the late reverend Mr Donald M'Queen, minister of Kilmuir, was the person who pointed out his

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brother to Mr Macpherson. Farther declares, That his the declarant's father was bed-ridden at the time, and did not see Mr Macpherson at the time; and farther declares that he cannot write.

his
MALCOLM + MACPHERSON.
mark.

(Signed) NORMD. MACDONALD, J. P.
A. MACDONALD, J. P.

DAVID CARMENT, *Clk.*

The declarant being asked if he ever heard any person express any doubt of the poems he heard so often repeated by his brother and others being the works of Ossian, depones, That to this hour he never did, and that he had no doubt himself on that head.

(Signed) NORMD. MACDONALD, J. P.
A. MACDONALD, J. P.

Edinburgh, 5th February, 1803.

A True Copy. *Præmissa Attestor.*
AND. BISSET, N. P.

2. *EWAN MACPHERSON's DECLARATION.*

At KNOCK, *in* SLEAT, *Sept.* 11, 1800.

APPEARED before us, two of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the county of Inverness, Mr Ewan Macpherson, late schoolmaster at Badenoch, aged

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seventy-three years, who declares, That he is a native of Badenoch, where, in his youth, he was acquainted with the late Mr James Macpherson, the translator of the poems of Ossian: That the declarant having come, about the year 1760, to this country from the opposite coast of Knoydart to pay a visit to the late Doctor John Macpherson, then minister of this parish, he happened to meet there his old acquaintance Mr James Macpherson, who was then employed in collecting the poems of Ossian, the son of Fingal: That as Mr Macpherson did not know the Gaelic orthography so well as the declarant, who could read the Gaelic character, which was anciently used by the Scotch and Irish Gaels, the Doctor and Mr Macpherson urged the declarant very much to accompany the latter to the Long island, for the purpose of committing to paper the recitations of persons they might find, who could repeat any of the said poems: That the declarant endeavoured to excuse himself, through a reluctance to be absent from his charge; but was importuned so exceedingly, that he agreed to go as far as Dunvegan; but when he reached that place, he was in a manner compulsively obliged by Colonel Macleod of Talisker, and the late Mr Maclean of Coll, to embark with Mr Macpherson for Uist on the same pursuit: That they landed at Lochmaddy, and proceeded across the Muir to Benbecula, the seat of the younger Clanranald: That on their way thither, they fell in with a man whom they afterwards ascertained to have been Mac Codrum the poet: That Mr Macpherson asked him the question—"A bheil dad agad air an Fhéinn?" by which he meant to enquire, whether or not he knew any of the poems of Ossian relative to the Fingalians; but that the terms in which the question was asked, strictly imported whether or not the Fingalians owed him any thing; and that Mac Codrum being a man of humour, took advantage of the incorrectness or inelegance of the

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Gaelic in which the question was put, and answered that really if they had owed him any thing, the bonds and obligations were lost, and he believed any attempt to recover them at that time of day would be unavailing. Which sally of Mac Codrum's wit seemed to have hurt Mr Macpherson, who cut short the conversation, and proceeded on towards Benbecula. And the declarant being asked whether or not the late Mr James Macpherson was capable of composing such poems as those of Ossian? Declares, most explicitly and positively, that he is certain Mr Macpherson was as unequal to such compositions as the declarant himself, who could no more make them than take wings and fly: That he believes firmly, no man, excepting Ossian himself, was ever capable of making such Gaelic poetry as Ossian's, which has a sublimity and nervousness that cannot be equalled, nor successfully imitated: Nor can the Gaelic of Ossian be rendered by the ablest translator into any other language, with an elegance suitable to the grandeur of the original: That, on the occasion above mentioned, the declarant was with Mr Macpherson three or four weeks, in the course of which, the declarant took down poems of Ossian from the recitations of several individuals, at different places, which he gave to Mr Macpherson, who was seldom present when they were taken down: That on that excursion they were one or two nights at the house of the elder Clanranald, at Ormiglade, and about a week at the house of the younger at Benbecula, and at Mr Mac Neil's, minister in South Uist, where he became acquainted with Mac Mhuirich, the representative of the celebrated bards of that name, but who was not himself a man of any note. From this man the declarant got for Mr Macpherson *a book of the size of a New Testament, and of the nature of a common-place-book*, which contained some accounts of the families of the Macdonalds, and the exploits of the great Montrose; together with some of the

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poems of Ossian. And Mr Macpherson obtained at the same time an order from Clanranald senr. on a Lieutenant Donald Macdonald at Edinburgh, for a Gaelic *folio* manuscript belonging to the family, which was called the *Leabhar Derg*, and contained, as the declarant heard Clanranald say, and as himself believed, some of the poems of Ossian; but the declarant never saw it, but is positive that the book given by Mac Mhuirrich was not the *Leabhar Derg*, for which Clanranald gave the order on Lieutenant Macdonald, being witness to the delivery of the first, but never saw the last, and is uncertain whether or not Mr Macpherson got it: That the declarant's anxiety to return to his duty occasioned, as he believes, Mr Macpherson's return from the Long island sooner than he wished: That the declarant understood from him, that he had collected the bulk of his materials in the shires of Inverness, Perth, and Argyle, before he came to the Islands; but that he was still anxious to collect additional matter, and various editions of the same poems: That the declarant recollects to have very often heard poems of Ossian, relative to the Fingalians repeated in his youth; and that, in general, the people of any taste with whom he was acquainted in his younger days, and had advanced in years, made it their entertainment, in the winter nights, to repeat the poems of Ossian, or hear them repeated to them; and as his profession made him reside in different parts of the Highlands, he found the same taste for Ossian's poems prevail among all classes of people: That the declarant's time was so fully occupied by his own duty, that he paid little attention to the poems of Ossian subsequent to the excursion above mentioned: That the persons whose recitations he took down were generally advanced in life: is uncertain whether any of them is alive at this distance of forty years; and that the relish for poetry

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has decayed greatly with the discouragement of the bards; but that he never heard the authenticity of the poems of Ossian called in question by any Highlander, and has no doubt of their being the productions of the genius of Ossian, as firmly as he believes in the authenticity of any other poems, or in the originality of any other work ancient or modern: That he never could have conceived that any individuals could have the hardiness to put their own sceptical conceits in opposition to the uniform tradition of ages, and the unanimous and unwearied opinion of a whole nation for many successive generations, of the authenticity of these poems, and of the heroes celebrated in them, having existed: and he does not believe it would be possible for men who understood Gaelic well, to have any doubt on this subject: That the declarant has no doubt that the Fingalians were Scotch Highlanders, but looks upon all disputes regarding the *Era*, and the particular scenes of action, to be totally independent of the authenticity of the poems, which he believes to have come down from remote antiquity, as firmly as he believes in his own existence: That some time subsequent to the above excursion, he met Mr James Macpherson at Edinburgh, and was presented by him with a copy of Fingal: That he recollects to have read a part of it, and to have been then of opinion, as far as he could recollect the substance of the original, that this translation was well executed; though the ablest that ever existed could not, in the declarant's opinion, equal the original Gaelic by any translation.

(Signed) EWAN MACPHERSON.
NORMD. MACDONALD, J. P.
A. MACDONALD, J. P.

ALEX. NIELSON, *Clerk.*

Edinburgh, 5th February 1803.

A True Copy. *Præmissa Attestor.*

AND. BISSET, N. P.

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No. VII.

ORIGINAL, ACCORDING TO JEROME STONE'S COPY.

BAS FHRAOICH, OR THE DEATH OF FRAOCH, WHO WAS DESTROYED BY THE TREACHEROUS PASSION OF HIS MOTHER-IN-LAW.

1.

Osan Caraid ann cluain Fhraoich,
Osan Laoich ann caiseal chro,
An Osan sin on tuirseach fear,
'Son tromghulanach Bean og.

2.

Sud e shiar an carn am bheil,
Fraoch Mac Fedhich an Fhuilt mhaoidh,
Am fear a rinn Buidheachas do Mhei,
Sann air a shloinnte Carn Fhraoich.

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3.

Gul nam ban on Chruachan shoir,
Is cruaidh an Fath man guil a bhen
Ise fhag a hosan go trom trom,
Fraoch Mac Fedhich na Colg sean.

4.

Gur i an ainir a nith an Gul,
Tighin gá fhios do chluain Fhraioch,
Donn abhradh an Fhuilt Chais aill,
Aon Inghean Maidhe ga m bidh na Laoich.

5.

Aon Inghean Choruil is grinne Falt,
Taobh re Taobh anochd is Fraoch,
Ga h-iomad Fear aghradhuigh i,
Nior ghaoluigh i Fear ach Fraoch.

6.

Nuair a fhuair i amuigh é,
Cairdeas an Laoich budh ghloinne gne
Is e abhar ma na reub i chorp,
Chion gun lochd a dheanamh ri.

7.

Gun chuir i e gu cath a Bhais,
Taobh re Mnaoi 's na dean a Lochd
Istuirseach do thuitim le Beist,
Dhinsin duibh gun cheilg a nòs.

8.

Caoran do bhidh air Loch maidhe,
Annsa 'n Traith tha shiar faoi dheas,
Gach Raidh is gach mi.
Bhiodh Torradh abbuigh annsa mheas.

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9.

Gun raibh Buaidh air a mheas dhearg,
Budh mhilse e na mil bhlādh
Go n cumadh an Caoran is e dearg,
Neach gun bhiadh car naoi Trath.

10.

Bliadhna do shaoghal gach Fir,
Dhinstn duibh anois a dhearbh
Gun cobhradh e air luchd chneimh,
Briogh a mheas is e dearg.

11.

An fim-cheist mhor abha na dheidh,
Ga be Leigh a chobhradh na sloigh
A Bheist nimhe bhi ag a Bhun,
Grabba dò Dhuine dhol ga bhuain.

12.

Do bhuail easlainte throm throm,
Air Inghean Omhuich na 'n corn fial,
Chuireadh lea fios air Fraoch,
Is fhiosrufgh an Laoch ciod e mian.

13.

Labhair i nach biodh i slan,
Mar fuidhe i lar a Boise maoidh,
Do Chaoran an Lochain fhuair
'S gun aon neach ga bhuain ach Fraoch.

14.

Cnuasachd ni ndrineas fein,
Thuirt Mac Meidhich na 'n gruaidh dearg,
Gar an drinnam arsa Fraoch
Theid mi bhuain a chaorain do Mheidh.

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15.

Gluaisidh Fraoch air cheimibh an-aigh,
Is chuaidh e shnamh air an Loch,
Shuair e Bheist na suirim suain
Is a craos a suas ris an Dos.

16.

Fraoch mac Medhich na 'n arm gear,
Thainig e on Bheist gun fhios,
Is ultach leis don chaoran dhearg,
Don bhall an raibh Meidh na Tigh.

17.

Ge maith uille na rinne leat,
Labhair Meidh budh ghille cneas,
Nim foghain leamsa, Laoich huain,
Gun ant shlat a bhuain as a bun.

18.

Ghluais Fraoch is nior ghille tium,
A Shnamh air an Linne bhuig,
Budh docair dho ge budh mhor agh,
Teachd on Bhas an raibh Chuid.

19.

Ghlac e an caorean air a Bhar,
Is tharruing an Crann as a Fhreimh,
Toirt a chosan do air tir,
Rug i air aris a Bheist.

20.

Rug a Bheist air ar an Traigh,
Ghlac si a lamh ann a craos,
Ghlac Fraoch ise air chiall,
Truagh a thria gan sgian ag Fraoch.

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21.

Theasgair a Bheist a chneas ban,
Leadair i a Lamh go leon,
Thain Inghean ur na 'n geal-ghlac,
Is ghrad thug i dho sgian gun fhoir.

22.

Cha chomhrag sin ach comhrag geart,
Bhuine an ceann di na laimh leis,
Fraoch Mac Meidhich is a Bheist,
Truagh a Dhe mar thug iad Greis.

23.

Go n do thuit iad bonn re bonn,
Air Traigh na 'n Clocha donn so bhos,
Nuair chonnairc ant shaor Inghean e,
Thuit i air an Traigh na neul.

24.

Nuair a mhosguil i as a Pramh,
Ghlac i a lamh na Laimh bhoig,
Ged ta thu nochd ad Chodaibh eun,
Is mor an teuchd a rinn thu bhos.

25.

Truagh nach ann an Comhrag Laoich,
A thuit Fraoch le 'm bronnta òr
Isturiseach a thuitim le Beift,
Truagh ad dhei is mairion beo.

26.

Budh duibhe na m fiach bar a fhuilt,
Budh deirge a Ghruaidh na fuil laoigh,
Budh mhine na Cobhar shruth,
Budh ghile na an sneachda Corp Fhraoich.

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27.

Budh treise na Comhla a sgiath,
B' iomad Triath a bhiodh re cul.
Budh comhf had a Lamh sa lann,
Budh leithne a chalg na clar luing.

28.

Bairde ashleagh na crann siuil,
Budh bhinne na teud ciuil aghuth,
Snamhaiche ab f hear na Fraoch,
Cha do chuir a thaobh re sruth.

29.

Budh mhaith spionna a dha Laimh,
Is budh ro mhaith cail a dha chois,
Chuaidh taigne thair gach Riogh,
Roimh chuiridh riamh cha diar fois.

30.

Ionmhuin Tighearn, ar mhian Tuath,
Ionmhuin gruaidh nar deirge Ros,
Ionmhuin Beul leis nach diulta dàimh,
Dam biodh na mnai ag toirbheart Phog.

31.

Thogamar anois an cluain Fhraoich,
Corp an Laoich an Caiseal Chro.
On Bhas ud a f huair am fear,
Mairg is mairion na dheigh beo.

32.

Gu mhi sud an tuabhar Mna,
Is mo chonnairceas air mo dha Roisg,
Fraoch a chur a bhuain a Chrainn,
An deis an Caoran a bhi bhos.

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33.

Air a chluain thugte an t ainm,
Loch meidhe raite ris an Loch,
Am biodh a Bheist anns gach uair,
Is a Craos a suas ris an Dos.

ALBIN AND THE DAUGHTER OF MEY.

2. *Translation of the foregoing, as published by Stone in the Scots Magazine for* 1756.

WHENCE come these dismal sounds that fill our ears!
Why do the groves such lamentations send!
Why sit the virgins on the hill of tears,
While heavy sighs their tender bosoms rend!
They weep for Albin with the flowing hair,
Who perish'd by the cruelty of Mey;
A blameless hero, blooming, young, and fair;
Because he scorn'd her passions to obey.
See on yon western hill the heap of stones,
Which mourning friends have raised o'er his bones!

O woman! bloody, bloody was thy deed;
The blackness of thy crime exceeds belief;

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The story makes each heart but thine to bleed,
And fills both men and maids with keenest grief!
Behold thy daughter, beauteous as the sky
When early morn ascends yon eastern hills,
She lov'd the youth who by thy guile did die,
And now our ears with lamentations fills:
'Tis she, who sad, and grovelling on the ground,
Weeps o'er his grave, and makes the woods resound.

A thousand graces did the maid adorn:
Her looks were charming, and her heart was kind;
Her eyes were like the windows of the morn,
And wisdom's habitation was her mind.
A hundred heroes try'd her love to gain;
She pity'd them, yet did their suits deny:
Young Albin only courted not in vain,
Albin alone was lovely in her eye:
Love fill'd their bosoms with a mutual flame;
Their birth was equal, and their age the same.

Her mother Mey, a woman void of truth,
In practice of deceit and guile grown old,
Conceiv'd a guilty passion for the youth,
And in his ear the shameful story told:
But o'er his mind she never could prevail;
For in his life no wickedness was found;
With shame and rage he heard the horrid tale,
And shook with indignation at the sound:
He fled to shun her; while with burning wrath
The monster, in revenge, decreed his death.

Amidst Lochmey, at distance from the shore,
On a green island, grew a stately tree,
With precious fruit each season cover'd o'er,
Delightful to the taste and fair to see:

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This fruit, more sweet than virgin honey found,
Serv'd both alike for physic and for food:
It cur'd diseases, heal'd the bleeding wound,
And hunger's rage for three long days withstood.
But precious things are purchas'd still with pain,
And thousands try'd to pluck it, but in vain.

For at the root of this delightful tree,
A venomous and awful dragon lay,
With watchful eyes, all horrible to see,
Who drove th'affrighted passengers away.
Worse than the viper's sting its teeth did wound,
The wretch who felt it soon behov'd to die;
Nor could physicians ever yet be found
Who might a certain antidote apply;
Ev'n they whose skill had sav'd a mighty host
Against its bite no remedy could boast.

Revengeful Mey, her fury to appease,
And him destroy who durst her passion slight,
Feign'd to be stricken with a dire disease,
And call'd the hapless Albin to her sight:
"Arise, young hero! skill'd in feats of war,
On yonder lake your dauntless courage prove;
To pull me of the fruit, now bravely dare,
And save the mother of the maid you love.
I die without its influence divine;
Nor will I taste it from a hand but thine."

With downcast look the lovely youth reply'd,
"Though yet my feats of valour have been few,
My might in this adventure shall be try'd;
I go to pull the healing fruit for you."
With stately steps approaching to the deep,
The hardy hero swims the liquid tide:

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With joy he finds the dragon fast asleep,
Then pulls the fruit, and comes in safety back;
Then with a chearful countenance, and gay,
He gives the present to the hands of Mey.

"Well have you done, to bring me of this fruit:
But greater signs of prowess must you give:
Go pull the tree entirely by the root,
And bring it hither, or I cease to live."
Though hard the task, like lightning fast he flew,
And nimbly glided o'er the yielding tide;
Then to the tree with manly steps he drew,
And pull'd, and tugg'd it hard, from side to side:
Its bursting roots his strength could not withstand;
He tears it up, and bears it in his hand.

But long, alas! ere he could reach the shore,
Or fix his footsteps on the solid sand,
The monster follow'd with a hideous roar,
And like a fury grasp'd him by the hand.
Then, gracious God! what dreadful struggling rose!
He grasps the dragon by th'invenom'd jaws,
In vain; for round the bloody current flows,
While his fierce teeth his tender body gnaws.
He groans through anguish of the grievous wound,
And cries for help; but, ah! no help was found!

At length, the maid, now wond'ring at his stay,
And rack'd with dread of some impending ill,
Swift to the lake, to meet him, bends her way;
And there beheld what might a virgin kill!
She saw her lover struggling on the flood,
The dreadful monster gnawing at his side;
She saw young Albin fainting, while his blood
With purple tincture dy'd the liquid tide!

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Though pale with fear, she plunges in the wave,
And to the hero's hand a dagger gave;

Alas! too late; yet gath'ring all his force,
He drags, at last, his hissing foe to land.
Yet there the battle still grew worse and worse,
And long the conflict lasted on the strand.
At length he happily descry'd a part,
Just where the scaly neck and breast did meet;
Through this he drove a well-directed dart,
And laid the monster breathless at his feet.
The lovers shouted when they saw him dead,
While from his trunk they cut the bleeding head.

But soon the venom of his mortal bite
Within the hero's bosom spreads like flame;
His face grew pale, his strength forsook him quite,
And o'er his trembling limbs a numbness came.
Then fainting on the slimy shore he fell,
And utter'd, with a heavy, dying groan,
These tender words, "My lovely maid, farewell!
Remember Albin; for his life is gone!"
These sounds like thunder all her sense opprest,
And swooning down she fell upon his breast.

At last, the maid awak'ning as from sleep,
Felt all her soul o'erwhelm'd in deep despair,
Her eyes star'd wild, she rav'd, she could not weep,
She beat her bosom, and she tore her hair!
She look'd now on the ground, now on the skies,
Now gaz'd around, like one imploring aid.
But none was near in pity to her cries,
No comfort came to soothe the hapless maid!
Then grasping in her palm, that shone like snow,
The youth's dead hand, she thus expres'd her woe.

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Burst, burst, my heart! the lovely youth is dead;
Who, like the dawn, was wont to bring me joy;
Now birds of prey will hover round his head,
And wild beasts seek his carcase to destroy;
While I who lov'd him, and was lov'd again,
With sighs and lamentable strains must tell,
How by no hero's valour he was slain,
But struggling with a beast inglorious fell!
This makes my tears with double anguish flow,
This adds affliction to my bitter woe!

Yet fame and dauntless valour he could boast;
With matchless strength his manly limbs were bound;
What force would have dismay'd a mighty host,
He show'd, before the dragon could him wound.
His curling locks, that wanton'd in the breeze,
Were blacker than the raven's ebon wing;
His teeth were whiter than the fragrant trees,
When blossoms clothe them in the days of spring;
A brighter red his glowing cheeks did stain,
Than blood of tender heifer newly slain.

A purer azure sparkled in his eye,
Than that of icy shoal in mountain found;
Whene'er he spoke, his voice was melody,
And sweeter far than instrumental sound.
O he was lovely! fair as purest snow,
Whose wreaths the tops of highest mountains crown;
His lips were radiant as the heav'nly bow;
His skin was softer than the softest down,
More sweet his breath, than fragrant bloom, or rose,
Or gale that cross a flow'ry garden blows.

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But when in battle with our foes he join'd,
And sought the hottest dangers of the fight,
The stoutest chiefs stood wond'ring far behind,
And none durst try to rival him in might!
His ample shield then seem'd a gate of brass,
His awful sword did like the lightning shine!
No force of steel could through his armour pass,
His spear was like a mast, or mountain-pine!
Ev'n kings and heroes trembled at his name,
And conquest smil'd where'er the warrior came!

Great was the strength of his unconquer'd hand,
Great was his swiftness in the rapid race;
None could the valour of his arm withstand,
None could outstrip him in the days of chace.
Yet he was tender, merciful, and kind;
His vanquish'd foes his clemency confest;
No cruel purpose labour'd in his mind,
No thought of envy harbour'd in his breast,
He was all gracious, bounteous, and benign,
And in his soul superior to a king!

But now he's gone! and nought remains but woe
For wretched me; with him my joys are fled,
Around his tomb my tears shall ever flow,
The rock my dwelling, and the clay my bed!
Ye maids, and matrons, from your hills descend,
To join my moan, and answer tear for tear;
With me the hero to his grave attend,
And sing the songs of mourning round his bier,
Through his own grove his praise we will proclaim,
And bid the place for ever bear his name.

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3. LITERAL TRANSLATION OF THE ORIGINAL.

THE sigh of a friend in the grove of Fraoch!
A sigh for the hero in it's rounded pale,
A sigh which causes each man to mourn,
And which makes each maiden weep!

There, to the westward, is the Carn *,
Which covers Fraoch, son of Fiach, of the soft hair,
He who obeyed the call of Mey,
And from whom that Carn of Fraoch has its name.

The maids from Cruchan weep,
Sad is the cause of their woe,
For their mournful sighs are occasioned,
By Fraoch, son of Fiach, of the ancient weapons.

Him most bewails the maid
Who comes to weep in the grove of Fraoch,
The brown-eyed fair of curling locks,
Only daughter of Meyv, whom the heroes obey.

Only daughter of Corul of finest hair,
Whose side to night is stretched by the side of Fraoch,
Though many were the men who sought her love,
She loved none but Fraoch.

* A monumental heap of stones.

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When Meyv found herself rejected
In the esteem of the hero of untainted character,
She devised to wound his body,
Because he would not partake in her guile.

For him she laid the snare of death,
Because he did not comply with a woman's wishes;
Sad was the destroying of him by a monster,
In the manner which I now shall candidly tell.

On the lake of Meyv was a mountain ash,
Where southward spreads the shore,
And during each month of the season
Its fruit was seen to be ripe.

Such was the virtue of its clusters
That sweeter it was than the honey of flowers;
And the reddened fruit would support
A person deprived of food for three days.

A year to the life of man,
It is certain that it would add,
And the diseased derived relief
From the juice of its ripened berry.

But danger hung on the pursuit of it;
For, though it proved a cure to the people,
A venomous monster lurked at its root
To prevent all from approaching to pluck it.

Grievous sickness seized
The daughter of Omhach of the generous cups:

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She sent a message to Fraoch,
And the hero enquired what was her wish.

She replied, that she could not be whole,
Unless she got the full of her delicate hand,
Of the fruit of that cold lake,
Pulled by no other man than Fraoch.

"Fruit was I never employed to gather,
Said Fiach's son, with blushing face;
But though I have not hitherto, added Fraoch,
I will now go to pull fruit for Meyv."

Fraoch departed with unpropitious steps,
And proceeded to swim on the lake:
He found the monster fast asleep,
And its jaw open to the tree.

Fraoch, son of Fiach, of arms keen,
Came from the monster unobserved,
Carrying an arm-full of the red fruit
To the place where Meyv was longing for it.

"Though good be that which you have done,
Said Meyv of the whitest bosom,
Nought will relieve me, generous champion!
But a branch torn from the trunk."

Fraoch, the youth who knew not fear,
Went again to swim the soft lake;
But he could not, how great soe'er his success,
Escape from his allotted death.

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He seized the mountain ash by the top,
And tore a branch from the trunk,
But as he was taking his steps toward land,
The rouzed monster observed him.

Overtook him as he was swimming,
And grasped his hand in its gaping gorge.
Fraoch seized the monster by the jaw;
Would Fraoch had now his dagger!

The monster mangled his bosom fair,
And gnawing tore his arm away.
The white-handed maid went in haste,
Bearing a dagger which proved of no avail.

The conflict was but a conflict of short continuance,
His hand still held by its head:
Woful was the end of the strife
Between Fraoch, son of Fiach, and the monster.

They fell sole to sole,
At those brown stones on the shore:
Which as the gentle maid beheld,
She fell on the beach a cloud of mist. *

When she awoke from her torpor,
She took his softened hand in hers,
"Though you be to night a mangled prey for fowls,
Great is the deed you have performed."

* An expression frequent in the Gaelic for swooning or fainting.

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Would it had been in the strife of heroes,
That Fraoch the bestower of gold had fallen.
Sad is his having fallen by a monster,
Woeful it is to survive him!

Blacker than the raven was the growth of his hair,
Redder was his cheek than the blood of the fawn;
Smoother than the foam of streams,
Whiter than snow was the skin of Fraoch.

Stronger than a gate was his shield,
Many a hero gathered around it;
Long as his sword was his arm,
Broad as the plank of a ship was his blade.

Taller than a mast was his spear,
Sweeter than the string of music was his voice,
A swimmer who excelled Fraoch
Never laid his side to a stream.

Good was the strength of his arms,
And exceeding good was the swiftness of his feet.
In soul he was superior to a king,
Of champion he never declined the combat.

Lovely was the chief whom the people esteemed,
Lovely the cheek which vied with the rose in redness,
Lovely the mouth which opposed not friendship's call,
And which the fair declined not to kiss.

We bore to the grove of Fraoch,
The body of the hero to its circular pale;
After the worthy has died,
To be alive is our regret.

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Cruelest of woman was she,
That ever were seen by eyes,
Who sent Fraoch to tear the branch,
After the fruit had been borne away.

The grove bears his name,
Loch Meyv is the name of the lake,
Where the monster kept watch,
And its open jaw to the tree.

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No. VIII.

SPECIMEN

OF THE POEMS COLLECTED BY MR. HILL,

AND OF HIS REMARKS.

Extract from Mr. Hill's publication.

THE following Song, called *Urnigh Ossian*, or *Ossian's Prayers*, is the relation of a dispute between Ossian and St. Patrick, on the evidence and excellence of Christianity. The arguments of St. Patrick are by no means those of an able Polemic: But the objections of Ossian carry with them the internal marks of antiquity: they are evidently the objections of a rude Polytheist, totally ignorant of the nature of the Christian tenets; and such as no later bards in such a rude country would ever have been able to invent, without some original and traditional foundation. Ossian seems to have thought, that hell might be as agreeable as heaven, if there were as many deer and dogs in it. "Why, (says "Ossian) should I be religious, if heaven be not in the

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"possession of Fingal and his Heroes? I prefer them to "thy God, and thee, O Patrick!" So Purchas relates*, that, when the Spaniards attempted to convert the inhabitants of the Philippine Isles to Christianity; the islanders replied, that they would rather be in hell with their forefathers, than in heaven with the Spaniards.

According to M'Nab, Fingal seems to have been the Odin of the Scots: for he said, they had no religion, prior to Christianity, but the reverence of Fingal and his race. This account agrees with the entire deficiency of religious ideas, in the Ossian of Macpherson and Smith; and with the opinions and prejudices expressed in the following Poem.

The Urnigh Ossian evidently appears, even through the medium of the following rude translation, to be superior in poetic merit to any of the Songs which accompany it. I am very sorry the translation is not entire. The first twenty-one verses, and the last verse, or thirty-sixth, were translated for me at Oban in Argyleshire, by a schoolmaster there; who was procured by Mr. Hugh Stephenson, innkeeper at Oban. The remainder of the translation was sent me from Edinburgh, in consequence of Dr. Willan's application.

URNIGH OSSIAN.

1.	v. 1.
AITHRIS sgeula Phadruig	Relate the tale of Patrick,
An onair do Leibhigh	in honour of your ancestors.—
'Bheil neamh gu harrid	"Is heaven on high in the pos-
Aig Uaisliamh na Féinne.	session of the heroes of Fingal?

* Pilgrimage Asia Ch. 16.

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2.

Bheirinnsa mo dheurbha dhuil
Oishein nan glonn
Nach bheil Neamh aig t athair
Aig Oscar no aig Goll.

St. Patrick. 2.

I assure thee, O Ossian!
father of many children *
that heaven is not in the
possession of thy father,
nor of Oscar, nor of Gaul†.

3.

'Sdona'n sgeula Phadruig
'La agad damhsa Chlerich
Com'am bethinnsa ri crabha

Ossian. 3.

It is a pitiful tale, O Patrick! that thou tellest me
the Clerk of: Why should

* This is ever accounted a great honour among Barbarians. See also Ossian agus an Clerich, v. 47, p. 15.

† I copied at Mac-Nab's, out of one of his MSS. the following lines, relative to Gaul abovementioned; which relate an incident remarkably similar to the stories told of Achilles, Hercules, the Jewish Samson, and the Teutonic giant Thor, &c. Gaul is generally esteemed one of the greatest of the giants: this extract describes one still mightier than he.

Cho drugain mo sgian do riogh na do Fhlath
No do dhuin air bith gun amhith no mhath
Naoid guinuiran do sgun achuire anamsa Goull
'Scho na fhuigin a thri annan biodh mo sgian nam dhonr
Ach dom gan tug luthadh lamh-ada anancean Ghaill anathadh
Gheig' e rann bhris e enai geal anceaumhum horn a mhi lean ta
Chuir emhala faraseal mhaoidh eain adheud rum h'or
Chuir e falam hors aghuiuidi agus enig me air na truighe
Sb'huin adsiann don tallamh 'sgula bhath belhidh fhaill 'ann
Farnach deanadh andan ach ball gorm na glas
Se ruda dheanadh an sgian an riach sanrrachadh abhor.

The sense of these lines, Mac-Nab gave me as follows: "Gaul and Uvavat "had a violent conflict: Gaul had a knife, Uvavat had none: Gaul stabbed "Uvavat nine times with his knife: Uvavat said, if he had had his knife, he "would not have suffered a third part so much; at last, lifting up his arm, "he struck Gaul on the skull, and fractured it; broke his bone; removed his "brow; knockt out his teeth; knockt off his knee-pan, and his five toes; all "at one blow. The mark of the blow shall remain in the ground for ever." Gaul's knife, mentioned here, seems to have been a kind of dirk; which, like the dagger of Hudibras, served in these rude times,

Either for fighting, or for drudging;
And when't had stabb'd, or broke a head;
It would scrape trenchers, or chip bread,

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Mur bheil Neamh aig Flaith no Fheinne.

I be religious, if heaven be not in the possession of Fingal?

4.

Nach dona sin Oishein
Fhir nam briathra boille
Gum b'fhear Dia ri 'sgacto aon'chàs
Na Fiànin Allabinn Uille.

St. Patrick. 4.

How wicked is that, O Ossian! thou who usest blasphemous expressions: God is much more mighty than all the heroes of Albion.

5.

Bfhearr leam aon' Chath laidir
'Churieadh Fiunn na Feinne
Na Tighearnaagh achrabhidh sin
Is tusa Chleirich.

Ossian. 5.

I would prefer one mighty battle, fought by the heroes of Fingal, to the God of thy worship, and thee, O Clerk.

6.

Ga beag a chubhail chrobhonanach
Is mònaran na grein
Gunf hios don Riogh mhòrdhalach
Cha dtèid fioidh dhile do Sgeithe

St. Patrick. 6.

Little as is the *chubhail*, or the sound of *greini*: yet it is as well known to this Almighty King as the least of your shields†.

7.

'Noavil u'm bionan e's mac Cubhall
An Riogh sin a bha air na Fiannibh
Dhei heudadh fir an domhain
Dol na Thallamhsan gun iaruidh

Ossian 7.

Dost thou imagine that he is equal to the son of Comhal? that King who reigned over the nations, who defeated all the people of the earth, and visited the kingdoms unsent for‡.

† This verse appears to be erroneously translated; the translator said, he knew not how to render the words *Chubhail* and *Greine* properly: the third verse also, in which Ossian is called the *Clerk*, a title, commonly given to St. Patrick; and some few other parts; seem not altogether correct.

‡ I suspect the expressions translated by Macpherson, *The King of the World*, are somewhat similar to these. Fingal is here represented as a Bacchus or Sesostris.

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8.

Oishain 's fada do shuain
Eirieh suas is eist na 'Sailm
Chaill a do luth sdo rath
Scho chuir u cath ri la garbh.

St. Patrick. 8.

O thou Ossian! long sleep has taken hold of thee: rise to hear the Psalms! Thou hast lost thy strength and thy valour, neither shalt thou be able to withstand the fury of the day of battle.

9.

Mo chail mi mo lùth smo ràth
'Snach mairionn cath abh'aig Fiunn
Bod ehleirs neachd sa's beag mo speis
'S do chiol eisteachd chonfheach leom

Ossian. 9.

If I have lost my strength and my valour, and none of Fingal's battles be remembered; I will never pay respect to thy clerkship, nor to thy pitiful songs.

10.

Chachualgs co meath mo cheòil
O thùs an domhain mhoir gus anochd
Tha ri aosta annaghleochd liath
Thir a dhioladh cliar air chnochd

St. Patrick. 10.

Such beautiful songs as mine were never heard till this night†. O thou who hast discharged many a sling ‡ upon the hills! though thou art old and unwise.

11.

'Strie a dhiol mi cliar air chnochd
'Illephadreig is Olc rùn
'Seacoir dhuitsa chàin mo chruth

Ossian. 11.

Often have I discharged many a sling upon a hill, O thou Patrick of wicked

* This seems to refer to the custom of singing songs at night, a favourite entertainment of the Highlands perhaps to this day. In v. 8. Ossian seems to be represented as falling asleep, instead of listening to St. Patrick.

† The word *cliar*, here translated a sling, may perhaps mean some other weapon.

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Onach dfhuair u guth air thùs.

mind! In vain dost thou endeavour to reform me, as thou first hast been appointed to do it.

12.

Chúalas Ceol Osciann do cheòil
Gè mòr a mholfas tu do Chliar
Ceòl air nach luigh leatrom laoich
Faoghar çuile aig an Ord Thiànn

12.

Music we have heard that exceeds thine, though thou praisest so much thy hymns; songs which were no hindrance to our heroes; the noble songs of Fingal.

13.

'Nuair a Shuig headh Fiann air chnochd
Sheumeneid port don Ord fhiann
Chuire nan codal na Sloigh
'S Ochoin ba bhinne na do Chliar.

13.

When Fingal sat upon a hill, and sung a tune to our heroes, which would enchant the multitude to sleep: Oh! how much sweeter was it than thy hymn‡!

14.

Smeorach bheag dhuth o Ghleann smàil
Faghar nom bàre rie an tuinn
Sheinnemid fein le' puirt
'Sbha sinn feinn sair Cruitt ro bhinn

14.

Sweet are the thrush's notes, and lovely the sound of the rushing waves against the side of the bark; but sweeter far the voice of the harps, when we touched them to the sound of our songs.

‡ When the Bards sung their songs at night, it seems to have been their custom to pursue them, till they had lulled their audience to sleep: See v. 10. and note: which accounts for the singular effect here ascribed to Fingal's Songs. It is related of Alfarabi, whom Abulfeda and Ebn Khalecan call the greatest Philosopher of the Mussulmans, that being at the Court of Seifeddoula Sultan of Syria, and requested to exhibit some of his Poems, he produced one, which he sung to an accompanyment of several instruments. The first part of it threw all his audience into a violent laughter; the second part made them all cry; and the last lulled even the performers to sleep. Herb. Orient. in voce. Thus also Mercury is said to have lulled Argus asleep by music.

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15.

Bha bri gaothair dheug aig Fiunn
Zugradhmed ead air Ghleann smàil
'Sbabhenne Glaoghairm air còn
Na do chlaig a Cleirich chaidh

15.

Frequently we heard the voices of our heroes among the hills and glens; and more sweet to our ears was the noise of our hounds than thy bells, O Clerk*!

16.

Coid arinn Fiunn air Dia
A reir do Chiar is do scoil
Thug e la air pronnadh Oir
San athlo air meoghair Chon

16.

Was Fingal created to serve God, to please the Clerk and his school†? he who has been one day distributing‡ gold, and another following the toes of dogs.

St. Patrick. 17.

17.

Aid miadt fhiughair ri meoghair chon
'Sri diólagh scol gach aon la
'Sgun eisheamail thoirt do Dhia
'Nois tha Fiunn nan Fiaunun laimh

As much respect as thou payest to the toes of dogs, and to discharge thy daily school**: Yet because thou hast not paid respect to God, thou and the heroes of thy race shall be led captive in hell.

Ossian. 18.

18.

Sgann achreideas me do sgeul
A Chleirich led leabhar bàn

I can hardly believe thy tale, thou light-haired and

* Ossian agrees with modern hunters, in his idea of the music of a pack of hounds. The bells mentioned in this verse appear to be an interpolation.

† "And Pharaoh said, Who is Jehovah that I should obey his voice to let "Israel go? I know not Jehovah." Exod. v. 2.

‡ The word in the original signifies pounding gold: it occurs again in v. 19.

** What schaol did Ossian keep?

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Gum bithidh Fiunn na chomh fhial
Aig Duine no aig Dia an laimh

19.

Ann an Ifrionn tha en laimh
Fear lin sath bhi pronnadh Oir
Air son a dhio mios air Dia
Chuirse e'n tighpian fuidh Chron

20.

Nam bithidh Clanna' Morn' asteach
'S Clann Oboige nam fear Ireun
Bheiremid ne Fiunn amach
No bhiodh an teach aguinn sein

21.

Cionfheodhna na Halabinn maseach
Air leatsa gum ba mhor am feum
Cho dtuga fin Fiunn amach
Ged bhiodh an teach aguibhfein

22.

Coid an tait Joghairne fein
Aphadruig a leib has an scoil

unworthy Clerk*! that the heroes of our race should be in captivity, either to the devil or to God.

St. Patrick. 19.

He is now bound in hell, who used to distribute gold. Because he was a despiser of God, he has hell for his portion.

Ossian. 20.

If the children of Morni, and the many tribes of the children of Ovi, were yet alive: we would force the brave Fingal out of hell, or the habitation should be our own†.

St. Patrick. 21.

Valiant as you imagine the brave Scots were; yet Fingal they would not release, though they should be there themselves.

Ossian. 22.

What place is that same hell, Patrick of deep learn-

* Why was light hair esteemed an opprobium? the Erse themselves are a red-haired race.

† The Greek stories about the visit of Hercules to Hell, for the purpose of delivering Theseus and fetching up Cerberus, are strikingly similar to the idea of this verse.

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Nach co math's Flathinnis De
Ma Gheibhar ann Feigh is Coin.

ing! Is it not as good as the heaven of God, if hounds and deer are found there *.

23.

Bha mise la air Sliabh boid
Agus Coilte ba chruaigh lann
Bha Oscar ann 's Goll nan Sliagh
Donall nam fleagh e rôn on Ghleann

24.

Fiunn mac Cubhill borb abhriogh
Bha e na Riochos air ceann
Tri mic ar Riogh os na n sgia
Ba mhor amian air dol a Shealg.
Sa Phadruig nam bachoil fiàl
Cho leigeadh iad Dia os an ceann

24.

Fingal the son of Comhal, fierce in action, was king over us. To the three sons of the King of Shields, pleasant was the chace. Generous Patrick of the innocent staff! they never would permit God to be named as their superior †.

25.

Ba bheach leam Dearmad e duibhn
Agus Fearagus ba bhinne Glôir
Nam ba chead leal mi efa n luaidh

25.

Much rather would I speak of Dermid, and Duino, and Fergus of eloquent speech, if you would give me leave to mention

* Mac-Nab mentioned this verse and the thirty-sixth when I saw him: for he had spoken to me about this Poem before he sent it.

† Though Ossian is generally represented as the son of Fingal, this verse and the next do not seem to speak of him in that relation. Mac-Nab said St. Patrick was Fingal's son.

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A Chleirich mhadh a theid don roim

them, O holy man who goest to Rome†.

26.

Coin nach ocad leam u dun Iuaidh
Ach thoir aire gu luath air Dia
'Nois tha deireadh air tòis
'Scuir do d Chaois ashean fhirle

St. Patrick. 26.

Why should I not permit you to mention them? but take care to make mention of God. Now the last things are become first. Change thou therefore thy ways, old man with the grey locks‡.

27.

Phadruig mathug u cead beagann
A labhairt duirn
Nach Aidmhich ùmas cead le Dia
Flath nan fiann arait' air thus

Ossian. 27.

Patrick, since thou hast given me leave to speak a little, wilt thou not permit us, with God's leave, to mention the King of Heroes first*?

28.

Cho d tug mise comas duit
Sheanfhir chursta is tu liath

St. Patrick. 28.

I by no means give thee leave, thou wicked grey-

† The contest here considerably resembles that at the beginning of *Ossian agus an Clerich*. The Roman Catholic superstition of later times in this passage evidently discovers itself: perhaps the *innocent staff*, mentioned in v. 24. may have some reference to the crosier.

‡ St. Patrick, Jesuit-like, seems willing to compound with Ossian; and to admit the Pagan songs, provided Ossian, on the other hand, would admit Christianity. Part of this verse is scriptural, "*So the last shall be first and the first last, for many are called but few chosen.*" Matth. xx. 16. and see also Mark ix. 35. Jesus Christ is here meant by the title of God. See v. 28.

‡ The opposition of Ossian seems to be considerably weakened in this verse: but he still wishes to see his old superstitions maintain the superiority at least.

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B'fhear Mac moire ri aon lo
No duine dtaineg riamh

haired man! The son of the virgin Mary is more excellent than any man who ever appeared upon earth.

29.

Nir raibh math aig neach fuin 'Ghrein
Gum bfhear efein na mo thrialh
Mac muirneach nach d'eitich Cliar
Scha leige se Dia osachian

30.

Na comh'ad 'usa Dnine ri Dia
Sheann fhir le na breathuich e
'S fada on thainig aneart
'Smairfidh se leart Gu brath

30.

Compare not any to God; harbour not any such thoughts, old man! Long has his superior power stood acknowledged, and it shall for ever continue.

31.

'Chomhad innse Fuinn namsleagh
Ri aon neach asheall sa Ghrein
Cha'd carr se riamh ne air neach
'Scho mho dhearr se niach ma ni

Ossian. 31.

I certainly would compare the hospitable Fingal to any man who ever looked the sun in the face. He never asked a favour of another, nor did he ever refuse when asked†.

† Ossian seems to have been offended at the gross reproaches which the humility of the Christian Apostle had just bestowed upon him with all the prodigality of one of Homer's heroes: and he answers with the rough but generous boldness of barbarous independence.

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32.

'S bheiremid seachd cath a fichead an fhiam
Air Shithair druim a Cliar amuidh
'Scho d tugamid Urram do Dhia
No chean cliar abha air bith.

33.

Seachd catha fichiad duibhs nar fein
Cho do chreid sibh ne n Dia nan Dùl
Cho mhairionn duine dar Sliochd
Scho bheo ach riochd Oishein Uir

34.

Cha ne fin ba choireach ruinn
Acts Turish Fhinn a dhol don Roimh
Cumail Cath Gabhridh ruinn feir
Bha e Claoidh bhur fein ro mhor

35.

Chone Chlaoidhsibh Uile fhann
Amhu Fhinn os gearr gud re
Eist ri rà Riogh nam bochd
Iar thusa 'nachd neamh dheul fein.

36.

Comracch an da Abstaildeúg
Gabham chugam feir aniugh
Ma rinn mise Peacadh trom
Chuir an cnochd sa n tôm sa'nluig.

Ossian. 36.

The belief of the twelve Apostles I now take unto me: and if I have sinned greatly, let it be thrown into the grave.

CRIOCH.

N. B. In printing this Extract from the publication of Mr. Hill, it was omitted to insert the words "I observed in "p. 19. that" before "*Gaul*" in l. 4. of note † p. 120. The last word of stanza 20. is to be read fein; and Riochos in l. 2. of stanza 24. is to be read Riogh os.

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No. IX.

OBSERVATIONS

ON THE GAELIC POEMS COLLECTED BY MR. HILL,

AND ON HIS REMARKS ACCOMPANYING THEM.

BY DR. DONALD SMITH.

THE original and translation of the foregoing Poem, as indeed all the rest of the Collection, abound in errors; the most remarkable of which shall now be pointed out.

Stanza 2. "Oisbein nan glonn" is translated "O Ossian! father of many children," instead of O Ossian of the deeds of prowess. Which mistake gave rise to the note of Mr. Hill—"This is ever accounted a great honour among "Barbarians. See also Ossian agus an Clerich, v. 47." The passage which is here referred to, is equally erroneous: For the original of it,

"Mi fein agus Mathair is Goll
"Triur bo mho Glonn san Fhein,"

is translated "Myself, my Father, and Gaul, were the "three who had most children among the heroes," instead

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of Myself, and my Father, and Gaul, were the three of greatest prowess among the heroes.

The error may have proceeded from mistaking *Glonn* prowess, for *Clann* children.

Stanza 7. " 'Noavil ù'm bionàn e s mac Cubhail
" An riogh sin a bha air na Fiannibh
" Dhefhendadh fir an domhain
" Dol na Thallamhsan gun iarruidh."

There is no word in the Gaelic language that bears the most distant likeness to '*Noavil*, which begins this quotation. It is to be presumed from the English that is given for it, *Dost thou imagine*, that the translator read, or took it, for *An Saoil*. And if we read it so, the literal translation of the passage is as follows—

Dost thou imagine that he was equal to the son of Comhal?
That king who was over the heroes of Fingal.
All the men of the world might enter
Into his hall unbidden.

Instead of which it is thus rendered in the version of Mr. Hill—" Dost thou imagine that he is equal to the son " of Cumhal? that king who ruled over the nations, who " defeated all the people of the earth, and visited their " kingdoms unsent for."

There seems but one way of accounting for so singular a translation of a very plain passage. Mr. Hill had observed (p. 16.), that he was " inclined to suspect that there are in " the song of *Dermid killing the wild Boar*, some words di- " rectly derived from the English, as Bheist, thri, &c." It did not, perhaps, occur to him that the Gaelic *bèist* and *trì* were synonymous with the *bestia* and *tria* of the Latin; in which they were known for a whole millennium, and we know not how much longer, before the English language,

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as it has been written from the time of its formation in the reign of Henry II. had a being*.

He might have known, however, from the very song in which it occurred to him, that *beist* does not apply, as beast does in English, to ever four-footed animal, but denotes a fierce beast, or beast of prey—the very meaning in which *bestia* is used by Cicero—Sexcentos ad bestias misisti†.

From this misapprehension Mr. Hill goes on to present to the eye of the reader a word purely English, which the Latin could have neither lent to the Celtic, nor borrowed from it. *D'fheudadh* (they might) was transformed into Dhéfheudadh, a word utterly unknown in the Gaelic, but which, from a similarity of sound, might be expressed in English by the word *defeated*. So that a future enquirer into the authenticity of Ossian's Poems, might, by this means, be led to suppose that they were no older than the reign of Henry II. of England, A. D. 1172. when the partial conquest atchieved by Dermot Mac-Murrogh king of Leinster, and Richard, surnamed Strongbow, Earl of Strigul, introduced the English tongue into Ireland: whence, by a singular hypothesis of Mr. Hill (to be hereafter noticed), which he adopted in contradiction of the very poems he has published, they might be transplanted into the Highlands of Scotland.

A translation so very singular as that of stanza 7. above quoted, had the effect of raising a suspicion equally singular

* "Pro tribus linguae Saxonicae epochis totidem dialectos censeo esse statuendas: Prima est quam majores nostri locuti sunt a primo suo in Britanniam ingressu ad Danorum usque introitum. Secunda est, quae in usu erat a Danorum in Britanniam ingressu ad Normannorum adventum. Tertia illa est quam locuti sunt majores nostri a Normannorum ingressu ad Henrici ejus nominis secundi tempora. Hanc Norman-Dano-Saxonicam vocandam censemus." Hickes. Thesaur. Linguar. Septentrional. p. 87, 88.

† Vid. Ainsw. Diction. in voce.

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in the breast of Mr. Hill, who thus expresses it in the note subjoined to it: "I suspect the expressions translated by "Macpherson, *the kings of the world*, are somewhat similar "to these. Fingal is here represented as a Bacchus or "Sesostris."

Stanza 16. "Thug e la air pronnadh † òir
"San athlo air meoghair chon,"
is translated, "He who has been one day distributing gold, "and another following the toes of dogs"—instead of

He passed one day in distributing gold,
And another in following the sport of hounds.

It is possible the misconception here was occasioned by the translator's being ignorant of the meaning of the word *meoghair*, or *meaghair*, as it ought to be written. But as he may not have had the fortitude to acknowledge his ignorance, he might read *meoir* (fingers, or toes, of the human species) for *meoghair*. He did not, perhaps, perceive that such a reading was as flagrant a violation of the sound and quantity of the verse, as it was foreign to the idiom of the language.

Stanza 18. "Sgann achroideas me do sgeul
"A Chlirich led leabhar bàn
"Gum bithidh Fionn na chomh fhiad
"Aig Duine no aig Dia an laimh."

The literal meaning of these lines is this,

I can hardly believe thy tale,
Thou Clerk with thy white book,
That Fingal, or any so generous as he,
Should be under captivity either to God or man."

The wide compass of Gaelic poetry does not contain a sentence of plainer meaning than that which is before us.

† For pronnadh read bronnadh. The first, as Mr. Hill remarks in the note, signifies *pounding*. The last means *distributing*.

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But mark the translation of it which Mr. Hill has given to the public. "I can hardly believe thy tale, thou light-"haired and unworthy Clerk! that the heroes of our race "should be in captivity either to the devil or to God."

It were idle to search for a key to this translation. But it supplies a note to Mr. Hill, which proves that he paid no less attention to the *natural history*, than he did to the radical structure of the Erse. "Why, (says he) was light "hair esteemed an opprobrium? the Erse themselves are a "red-haired race."

Stanza 24. "Sa Phadruig nam bachoil fial" is translated "Generous Patrick of the innocent staff!" instead of *Patrick of the generous staves*; an unmeaning expression resulting from writing *fial*, instead of *fiar*, which last signifies *crooked*. Mr. Hill, however, very happily stumbles on the truth, when he observes in a note that "perhaps "the *innocent staff*, mentioned in v. 24. may have some re-"ference to the crosier." For certain it is that the pastoral staff of the primitive teachers of Christianity, both in Scotland and Ireland, was called *Babul*, after the Roman *baculus*, *baculum*, or *bacillum*, and that, like the *lituus* of the Roman Augurs, it was crooked: For which reason it also got the name of Cambhatta or crooked staff, as the crosier of that Abbot Columbanus is termed, by whom the monastery of Bobio in Italy was founded in the year 614. "Qui et "baculum ipsius, quem vulgo *Cambuttam* vocant, per ma-"num Diaconi transmiserunt*."

A piece of land is still held in the island of Lismore, by virtue of a grant from an Earl of Argyll, on condition that the holder do keep and take care of the *Baculus* of Maluag, after whom its church is named. From which circumstance

* Theodor. Monach. & Abb. de vit. S. Mag. apud Henric. Canis. Lection. antiq. Tom. I. Sæc. VII. Antw. 1725.

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he is called Baran a Bhachuil, or the landholder of the Baculus.

Stanza 26. " 'Nois tha deireadh air tòis
" 'Scuir do d chaois a shean fhirlé" is translated " Now the last things are become first. Change thou there-" fore thy ways, old man with the grey locks."

There are no such words as *chaois* and *tòis* in the Gaelic language; and the couplet in which they here occur, was probably meant to be written thus:

Nois tha deireadh air t aois
Scuir dod bhaois a shean fhir lèi. The meaning of which would be, *Now that thy age is at a close, cease from thy vain talk, old grey man.* The resemblance of *tòis* to *tòs*, which signifies beginning, may perhaps account for this error, on which the following ingenious remark is made in the note annexed to it.

" Part of this verse is scriptural: *So the last shall be first,* " *and the first last, for many are called but few chosen.* Matth. " xx. 16. and see also Mark ix. 35."

The lines in the note (†) to stanza 2. which Mr. Hill " copied at Mac Nab's out of one of his MSS." and " which," he tells us, " relate an incident remarkably " similar to the stories told of Achilles, Hercules, the Jew-" ish Samson, and the Teutonic giant Thor, &c." are altogether unintelligible. But it is obvious to every eye, that they contain no such name as Uvavat, which occurs four different times in the English that is subjoined as the sense of them.

From this and other matters, there is reason to suspect, that Mr. Mac Nab, and some more of Mr. Hill's Highland friends, were not altogether pleased with a stratagem which he unguardedly devised with a view to blind them; and that to prove themselves more than capable of discovering

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the simplest deception that ever was practised, they returned it with a refined and courteous simulation.

"I made it a part of my business (says our author), "during my journey through the Highlands, to search "out the traditionary preservers of these songs; and pro- "cure copies with as much attention and exactness as lay "in the power of a foreigner, and a stranger to the lan- "guage. The absurd difficulties I had to encounter with "in this pursuit, it is not necessary to enumerate: some- "times I was obliged to dissemble a knowledge of the "Erse, of which I scarcely understood six words; some- "times I was forced to assume the character of a profest "author, zealous to defend the honour of Ossian and Mr. "Macpherson†."

The first fruits of this new species of *finesse* might convince a less sanguine politician of its inefficacy. For the first song of which he offers a translation, was sung with ready civility by James Mac Lachlan, a very old man, and a tailor, who did not understand his language; and of so little use were his six imperfect words of Erse in imposing on the understanding of a cottager whom he called in to act as interpreter, that he suspected him of having omitted to translate a considerable part of the song.

Yet, in spite of this failure, he continues to dissemble, and goes so far even as to pretend a knowledge in the Erse to a man whom he "found by no means deficient in ingenuity."

"By the assistance of Mr. Stuart (says our author), I "was afterwards directed to one James Maclauchan, a very "old man, much celebrated for his knowledge of ancient "songs. Maclauchan was a tailor; those artists being of "all men the most famous for this qualification. I found "him in an old woman's cottage near Blair, entirely will-

† Ancient Erse Poems collected by Tho. F. Hill, p 5, 6.

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"ing to gratify my curiosity, and indeed highly flattered "that I paid so much attention to his songs: but as he "could not talk English, I was obliged to supply myself "with another cottager, to translate whilst he sung. The "following poem I wrote down from the mouth of our in- "terpreter; a circumstance which naturally accounts for "the ruggedness of the language.—At the place mark- "ed (*) we suspected that our interpreter, weary of his "employment, desired old Maclauchan to omit a consider- "able part of the song, and repeat the concluding verse "immediately.

"As I had been informed, in my first excursion through "the Highlands; that one Mac Nab, a blacksmith at Dal- "maly, had made it his business to collect and copy many "of the songs attributed to Ossian: I determined upon re- "visiting Dalmaly, in order to obtain from him all the in- "telligence he was able to afford me.—I found him by no "means deficient in ingenuity. A blacksmith in the High- "lands, is a more respectable character than with us in "England.—From this man I obtained many songs, which "are traditionally ascribed to Ossian. The following poem "of *Ossian agus an Clerich*, he gave me in Erse; for to him "I pretended a knowledge in that language‡."

A person whose pretensions to the knowledge of Erse were supported only by half a dozen of words which he scarcely understood, could not possibly impose upon a man of ingenuity who spoke, read, and wrote the language. Nor could a man of this description fail to consider *honesty as the best policy* of a stranger who sought for information. But an attempt at deception, which was as harmless as it was artless, would seem to him a fitter subject for pleasantry than indignation; especially if he happened to be a man of humour. Hence we can account for some rare pieces of

‡ Ibid. p. 7, 8.

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information, with which Mr. Mac Nab thought proper to amuse Mr. Hill.

In the number of these may be ranked the tale of the new-found giant Uvavat, mentioned above, whose bruising match with Gaul proves him still "mightier and greater" than this last; who, Mr. Hill informs us, "he had obser-"ved in p. 19. *to be generally esteemed one of the greatest of* "*the giants:*" forgetting, no doubt, that all he had observed in p. 19. was, that "Gaul is always called *Mhoir* "*Ghuill* or *Great Gaul*, and *seems* to have been esteemed "one of the largest of the Fingalian giants." To which he adds, "See Ossian agus an Clerich, v. 10. Fhir mhoir: "great man or giant, &c." But certain it is, that Gaul neither is, nor can be, called *Mhoir Ghuill* without a gross violation of idiom, and that Goll mor (as he has it in p. 17. line 11.) is the Gaelic of Great Gaul; which epithet, however, is only bestowed upon him occasionally. And tho' it be true that the words *fhir mhoir* (in the genitive definite, and vocative, cases) signify *great man*, they denote a giant no more than they do a dwarf; as is plainly seen by the very v. 10. to which the reference is made, and is as follows:

"Hog iad an Coishri on Choill
"Schuir iad orra an Airm ghaidh
"San air Gualin gach Fhir mhoir
"Is thog siad orra on Traidh."

"They bore away from the woods; they put on their "beautiful armour on every great man's shoulder; and "they bore away from the shore."

According to our author's conjecture, every great man in the host of Lochlin (to which this verse refers) must have been a giant; and every man throughout Scotland and Ireland, who approaches or exceeds the height of six feet, and is thick in proportion, is also to be regarded as a giant, because he is designed *fear mor* in the language of those coun-

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tics, which acknowledges no other term for giant than *fombair*.

The astonishing tale of Uvavat, not unlike in its effect to that by which the fair Desdemona was wooed, made so strong an impression on the imagination of our author, that he believed the original of a poem, which he gives in English only, represented Oscar as a giant, and as killing nine score men at one stroke. He believed, even farther, that the title of *great hero* meant *giant* in the Erse.

To a determined believer in giants, "trifles light as air—"are confirmation strong—like proof of sacred writ;" so that the following verse was considered as affording ample evidence of the fact.

"Nine score men armed with bows and arrows that "came to destroy us; all these fell by the hand of Oscar "enraged at the sons of Ireland." On which it is remarked in a note, "The original I believe represents Oscar as a "giant, and as killing these multitudes at one stroke. The "title of Great Hero given to Cairbar, v. 10. and to Arsht, "v. 19. I believe means also giant in the Erse*."

Mr. Mac Nab, who was "by no means deficient in in-"genuity," gravely signified to Mr. Hill, that those giants were deified by their Scots posterity; in which respect, it seems, they resembled certain demi-giants of Greece, and the northern parts of Europe. "According to Mac Nab, "(says he), Fingal seems to have been the Odin of the "Scots: for he said, they had no religion, prior to Christi-"anity, but the reverence of Fingal and his race†." And, again, "I have before remarked, that Mac Nab described "Fingal as the Odin of the Scots; and that the song called "Urnigh Ossian, speaks of him as such.—The gods of all "the northern nations seem to have been of this class: "mighty heroes, esteemed once to have been invincible on

* Ibid. p. 26, 27. † Ibid. p. 21.

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"earth, though perhaps not ever strictly men, nor yet con-
"stantly regarded as giants. Such are Odin, Thor, and the
"other Teutonic gods: such are Fingal, Oscar, and the
"rest of the Fingalians among the ancient Scots: such also
"are Hercules, Bacchus, and even Jupiter himself, with all
"his sons and daughters, among the original Greeks; a
"people who agreed in many particulars, with our own
"ancestors in northern Europe ‡."

Mr. Hill, in his "assumed character of a profest author," made a discovery which had escaped the notice of all other authors: For he found that Ossian's heroes bore a striking resemblance to the followers of Mahomet in the monopolizing of wives, and shutting them up in a kind of Haram which they called a Castle. "This castle stood in the isle "of Skye, and their women were confined in it; 'For, "(said Mac Nab), they kept many women like the "Turks †."

Never was ingenuity practised more successfully than it was by Mr. Mac Nab. For what he told in pleasantry, and in opposition to the current belief of his country, was told with so serious an air, that Mr. Hill believed it implicitly; and yet expressed a doubt of what he wrote him in good earnest, as follows:

"SIR,

"I send you this copy of Ossian's Prayers. I
"could give you more now, if I had time to copy them:
"them I gave you was partly composed, when they went
"from their residence (in Cromgleann nan cloch) that is
"Glenlyon Perthshire, to hunt to Ireland. ——

ALEX. M'NAB.

"*Barcaastan*, (a mistake for
"*Baracbastalain*), 27th June 1780."

‡ Ibid. p. 32, 33. † Ibid. p. 20.

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"In this letter, (says Mr. Hill), Mac Nab seems to "imply that the Fingalians divided their time between "Ireland and Scotland; though the songs themselves "mention only Erin or Ireland, its peculiarities and tradi- "tions. The following Song, called *Ossian's Prayers*, "which indeed is in many respects the most curious of any, "is also the only one he gave me that mentions Scotland "or Allabinn. He, however, related to me the history of "another song; a copy of which has been published by "Smith in his *Gaelic Antiquities*, under the title of *The* "*Fall of Tura*; likewise mentioning Scotland, and con- "taining some other remarkable particulars‡."

Now it is certain, that not only the general tradition, but likewise the ancient poetry of the Highlands, as published by Mr. Hill himself, represents the Fingalians as residing in Scotland, and going thence to hunt in Ireland; and that they also make repeated mention of the peculiarities and traditions of the former kingdom. It is farther certain, that Crom-ghleann nan clach is mentioned in the Gaelic poems as a residence of Fingal; and that the reciters of them allege it to be Glenlyon in Perthshire, where a round building formed of huge stones without mortar or cement, is still known by the name of Tigh Ghrom-ghlinn nan clach. But let us attend to what Mr. Hill himself says upon this head.

"Glenlyon, which Mac Nab in his letter speaks of as "one of the principal abodes of the Fingalians, lies in the "western part of Perthshire, on the borders of Argyle- "shire, near Loch Tay.

"Throughout this country are many ruins of rude stone "walls, constructed in a circle; the stones of which are "very large: these are said by tradition to be the work of "Fingal and his heroes. One of these ruins is close by

‡ Ibid. p. 20.

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" Mac Nab's house. The Pictish houses are buildings of " this sort.

" Many places in the country, as glens, lochs, islands, " &c, are denominated from the Fingalians. The largest " carns, which abound here, are said to be their sepulchral " monuments: indeed all striking objects of nature, or " great works of rude and ancient art, are attributed to " them; as other travellers have already informed the " world†."

May I presume to add to this correct account, that, near the ruin which is close by Alexander Mac Nab's house, as above-mentioned, there is another in a field, to the southward of it, which still retains the name of Làrach nam Fiann, or the Ruin of the Fingalians.

The numberless names of places, and the uniform tradition, which preserve the memory of Fingal and his heroes, throughout the whole of the Highlands and Western Isles of Scotland, prove that they dwelt in this country; and the ancient poems published by Mr. Hill, are in perfect agreement with that proof.

" I shall conclude these Erse Songs, (says he), with a " poem called the Ode of Oscar; whose authenticity, per- " haps, admits the least dispute of any which I have sent " you. I did not obtain it, like most of the rest, from " Mac Nab; but wrote it down immediately from the " mouth of a man who was wright or carpenter at Mr. " Maclean's of Drumnan in Morven, and who knew a " number of these songs.—In order to have some check " against deception, I attempted to write down the Erse, " together with the translation; but as a language, written " by one who is a stranger to it, must necessarily be unin- " telligible, I shall only trouble you with the latter. The " poem relates the death of Oscar; which is the subject of

† Ibid. 20, 21.

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"the first book of Macpherson's Temora. It opens "with a lamentation for the death of Chaoilte, which is "foreign to the rest of the song; a practice not uncommon "among the poems attributed to Ossian, and similar to "that of Pindar‡."

Now, in this poem we observe the following passages—V. 3. "Did you hear of Fingal's journeys on every forest "in Erin? Great Cairbar with his armour sent for us to "destroy us." Be it remarked that *forest*, in the English of Scotland, does not mean an extensive wood, but a mountainous tract which is stocked, or abounds, with deer and other game.

V. 6,—12. "The last day of our drinking match, "Cairbar spoke with his tremendous voice. 'I want we "should exchange arms, brown Oscar, that comest from "Albion.' *Oscar*. 'What exchange do you want to "make, great Cairbar, who even press the ships into your "service; and to whom I and all my host belong, in time "of war and battle. Surely it is oppression to demand "our heads when we have not arms to defend ourselves. "The reason of your doing so is our being deprived of "Fingal and his son. Were Fingal and my father with "us as they used to be, you would not during your whole "life obtain the breadth of your feet in Erin.

"The great hero (Cairbar) was filled with rage at the "dispute which arose between them. There were ex-"ceeding horrible words between Cairbar and Oscar. "That night the women had a warm dispute about the "heroes, and even Cairbar and Oscar themselves were "half and half angry.

"Nine score men armed with bows and arrows, that "came to destroy us; all these fell by the hand of Oscar "enraged at the sons of Ireland†."

‡ Ibid. p. 25, 26. † Ibid. p. 26, 27.

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The only comment to be made upon this passage is, that Albain or Albion, which is known to have been the most ancient name of the British isle, still continues to be the only word by which Scotland is known in the language of its primitive inhabitants; which, on that account, was indifferently termed Scotic, Albanic, or Scottis, by the oldest of our Latin and English writers; as the Bishops of St. Andrews in the twelfth century, were likewise styled by way of eminence in the language of their diocese, Escop Alban, or Bishops of Scotland *.

The Urnigh Ossian (copied above at full length) "which (if Mr. Hill informs us aright) is in many respects "the most curious of any, and appears to be superior in "poetic merit to any of the songs which accompany it," seals the evidence of the poem we have just examined.

* Vid. Ptolem. orb. Antiq. Tab. geogr. "Britannia, quae et Albion. Gul. Camden. Brit. in initio "Antiquissimum Insulae nomen creditur fuisse Albi- "on. Sed hoc nomen magis e libris eruitur, quam in communi sermone "usurpatur, nisi praesertim apud Scotos, qui se Albinich, suam regionem Al- "bin adhuc vocant." Georg. Buchannan. Rer. Scotic. L. I. p. 10. Traject. ad Rhenum 1697.

"Latinè potest dici Colliculus Angelorum, Scoticè vero Cnoc Angel. Adamnan. Vit. S. Columb. L. III. C. 16.

"Patria linguâ ait Mochohe! Mochohe! quod latinè dicitur care mi, care "mi—vocans—et puerum KYENTYERN quod interpretatur *Capitalis Dominus*— "Nam KEN *caput* latinè; TYERN Albanicè, Dominus latinè interpretatur."
Jocelin. Vit. S. Kentigern. Joan. Pinkerton edente, Cap. 4, 33.

"Bot this Hed that cald wes thus
"Wes cald Hed-Pyn in Scottis lay,
"In Inglys Hed-Qwhyt thet is to say."
And. Wyntowu's Cronykil of Scotl. B. VI. c. 4. p. 161.

"Sic et nunc quoque in vulgari et communi locutione *Escop Alban*, i. e. Episcopi Albaniae appellantur. Sic et dicti sunt, et dicuntur per excellentiam, ab universis Scotorum Episcopis; qui a locis quibus praesunt appellantur. Excerpt. de Magno Registro Priorat. Sti Andreae. in Appendix to Pinkerton's Enquiry, Vol. I. p. 464. This part of the Register bears (p. 463, 464.) to have been written in the reign of David, brother and successor of Alexander I. which began in 1124, and ended in 1153.

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V. 3,—5. "*Ossian.* It is a pitiful tale, O Patrick! "that thou tellest *me the Clerk of:*" [a mistake of the "translator for *me of, O Clerk!*] "Why should I be reli- "gious, if heaven be not in the possession of the heroes of "Fingal?"

"*St. Patrick.* How wicked is that, O Ossian! thou "who usest blasphemous expressions: God is much "more mighty than all the heroes of Albion."

"*Ossian.* I would prefer one mighty battle, fought by "the heroes of Fingal, to the God of thy worship, and "thee, O Clerk!"

V. 19,—21. "*St. Patrick.* He is now bound in hell, "who used to distribute gold. Because he was a despiser "of God, he has hell for his portion."

"*Ossian.* If the children of Morni, and the many tribes "of the children of Ovi, were yet alive; we would force "the brave Fingal out of hell, or the habitation should be "our own."

"*St. Patrick.* Valiant as you imagine the brave Scots "were; yet Fingal they would not release, though they "should be there themselves."

It must be remarked, that an ambiguity which might be alleged to result in the last of these verses, from the name of Scots, which extended to natives of Ireland soon after the age of St. Patrick, is occasioned by a perversion of the original;

"V. 21. Cion fheodhna na Halabinn maseach
"Air leatsa gum ba mhor am feum
"Cho dtuga sin Fiunn amach
"Ged bhiodh an teach aguibh fein."

The literal meaning of which is this:

The leaders of the host of Albion, in succession,
Great as you deem their prowess,
Could not effect the release of Fingal,
Though the habitation were your own.

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The words which are here translated *your own* are plural in the original: So that the whole of the six verses now quoted, express in the clearest manner, that Fingal and his venerable son, with the heroes whom he celebrates, were inhabitants and natives of Scotland.

As the two songs which we have just examined, shew Scotland to have been the country of Fingal and his heroes; so, two other ancient songs with which Mr. Hill has favoured the public, will prove them to have an intimate connection with the "peculiarities and traditions" of that kingdom.

"The first of them relates to the Death of Dermid:" On a passage of which, as translated in Smith's Gaelic Antiquities, p. 194. Mr. Hill has this note: "Smith adds, "that the clan of Campbell, said to be descended from "Dermid, assume the boar's head for their crest from this "event†." And he afterwards remarks in another note, "As Hengist, Horsa, and the other Saxon chiefs, derived "their pedigree from Odin, so the Campbells, &c. derive "theirs from Dermid and the rest of the Fingalians‡." And, in truth, it is a general belief over all the Highlands and Western Isles of Scotland, that the Campbells are descended of this very Dermid: a striking instance of which belief is remarked by the Rev. Mr. Pope of Reay, in a letter to Dr. Blair*. But the tradition of it is peculiar to Scotland; for the account of Irish history is, that the illustrious house of Argyll took its rise from Fathod Canann, son of Lughad Mac Con, who succeeded to the kingdom of Ireland in the year 250†.

† Ancient Erse Poems, p. 15. ‡ Ibid. p. 33. * See p. 54.

† "Fathodius Canann Macconii regis filius, Argatheliae in Scotia Comiti-"bus Cambellis (Hibernicè Mac Cathlin)—originem dedit." Roderic. O'Flahertii Ogyg. p. 330.

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"The next poem is an account of the Death of Bran, "Fingal's celebrated dog:" on which it is sufficient to remark, that, close by one of the ancient ruins in Glenlyon, described by Mr. Hill, as already mentioned, there is an erect stone, called Cŏnabhacan, or the Dog-stake, to which Bran, according to the tradition of the neighbourhood, used to be bound.

Traditions of this kind, it is true, are not peculiar to Scotland, but common to it with Ireland; where the scenes of Fingal's hunting adventures are still pointed out. But they prove the fallacy of Mr. Hill's observation, that "the "songs themselves mention *only* Erin, or Ireland, its pecu- "liarities and traditions." Especially, as the two songs last named make no mention either of Ireland, or of Scotland; and of the other five, which he has published, there are but four that mention Ireland, and one of these, which mentions both countries, agrees with the fifth, which mentions Scotland alone, in representing the latter as the proper land of the Fingalians.

Mr. Hill's error appears to have proceeded, in part, from an impression which was made upon him by the first verse of the translation of the poem which relates the Death of Oscar. "I am very sad after thee, Chaoilte! since those "who were my contemporaries are departed. I am filled "with grief, sorrow, and pain, since my foster-brother is "gone from me." On which he remarks in a note, "The "intimate connection of fosterage here so strongly express- "ed, is in a great degree peculiar to Ireland, and seems "strongly to point out the origin of this song†."

Now it is certain that the intimate connection of fosterage is no more peculiar to Ireland, considered in comparison with Scotland, than sadness after friends and departed contemporaries is peculiar to it; as Mr. Hill might have

† Ancient Erse Poems, p. 20.

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learned in every part of his progress through the Highlands. It is the more extraordinary it escaped him, that "the great Dr. Johnson himself," who is mentioned in the beginning of his pamphlet, had taken particular notice of it.

"There still (says the Doctor) remains in the islands, "though it is passing fast away, the custom of fosterage. "A laird, a man of wealth and eminence, sends his child, "either male or female, to a tacksman, or tenant, to be "fostered. It is not always his own tenant, but some "distant friend that obtains this honour: for an honour "such a trust is very reasonably thought.

"Children continue with the fosterer perhaps six years, "and cannot, where this is the practice, be considered as "burdensome. The fosterer, if he gives four cows, re- "ceives likewise four, and has, while the child continues "with him, grass for eight without rent, with half the "calves, and all the milk, for which he pays only four "cows when he dismisses his *dalt*, for that is the name for "a foster child.

"Fosterage is, I believe, sometimes performed upon "more liberal terms. Our friend, the young Laird of Col, "was fostered by Macsweyn of Grissipol. Macsweyn "then lived a tenant to Sir James Macdonald in the Isle of "Skye; and therefore Col, whether he sent him cattle or "not, could grant him no land. The *dalt*, however, at his "return, brought back a considerable number of *macalive* "cattle, and of the friendship so formed there have been "good effects. When Macdonald raised his rents, Mac- "sweyn was, like other tenants, discontented, and resigned "his farm, and removed from Skye to Col, and was esta- "blished at Grissipol†."

Mr. Hill's mistaken notion of fosterage "being in a great "measure peculiar to Ireland," led him, by a natural asso-

† A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland, p. 313,—316.

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ciation of ideas, to imagine more than he had seen or heard. He conceived that "the songs relating to the Feinne, and "their chieftain, Fion-mac-Coul, or Fion-na-Gaël, whom "we call in English Fingal; are wholly confined to Ar-"gyllshire, and the Western Highlands, where the scene "of their actions is supposed to have lain*."

And he asserted that "the songs preserved in the High-"lands relative to the Fingalians, are wholly confined to "the western coast of the Highlands opposite Ireland; "that the very traditions of the country themselves ac-"knowledge the Fingalians to be originally Irish; and "that the genealogy of Fingal was there given him as fol-"lows: Fion Mac Coul, Mac Trathal, Mac Arsht Riogh "Erin, or King of Ireland, thus attributing the origin of "his race to the Irish†."

Nothing short of the irresistible power of associated ideas could have induced Mr. Hill to inform his readers, that the songs in question "are wholly confined to the western coast "of the Highlands, where the scene of the actions" to which they refer "is supposed to have lain," after he had told them, but a few pages back, that "Mr. Stuart, mini-"ster of Blair, whom he visited in company with Mr. "Stokes—favoured them with the story of a song, relating "to Dermid one of the Feinne—of which he afterwards "obtained a copy in the original Erse:" and that, "from "one Mac Nab, a blacksmith at Dalmaly, he obtained "many songs, which are traditionally attributed to "Ossian‡." Blair and Dalmaly are inland places, very remote from any part of the western coast of the Highlands that is opposite to Ireland; and if Mr. Hill had visited the shires of Inverness, Ross, Sutherland, and Caithness, he would have found the poems, tales, traditions, and local names, which regard the Fingalians, to be as common there

* Ancient Erse Poems, p. 7. † Ibid. p. 31. ‡ Ibid, p. 7, 8, 9.

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as in Argyllshire. The person who gave him the genealogy of Fingal, must have cut it short, as the cottage translator, and tailor, at Blair, did the song; for the usual genealogy of Fingal throughout the Highlands is Fionn mac Chumhail, mhic Thrathail, mhic Threunmhoir: *i. e.* The son of Cumhal, the son of Trathal, the son of Trenmor. Luthach is sometimes mentioned in the place of Trathal. But this must be accounted a mistake; for Trathal is vouched by the original poems to make a link in the pedigree of Fingal. In a speech, for instance, which that celebrated chief addresses to his favourite grandson, to inculcate the principles of honour, magnanimity, and valour, by the example of his ancestors, he says as follows;

" Oscair!———
" Chunaic mi dears' do lainn, be m'uaill
" Bhi ag amharc do bhuaidh sa chath.
" Lean gu dlùth re cliu do shinnsear,
" Is na dibir a bhi mar iadsan.
" Nuair bu bheo Treunmor na rath
" Is Trathal athair nan treunlaoch,
" Chuir iad gach cath le buaidh
" Is bhuanaich iad cliu gach teugbhoil *."

In English,

O Oscar! I saw the gleaming of thy sword,
And I gloried to see thee victorious in the battle.
Tread close on the fame of thy fathers,
And cease not to be as they have been.
When Trenmor of glorious deeds did live,
And Trathal the father of heroes,
They fought every battle with success,
And obtained the praise of each deadly contest.'

* Briathran Fhinn re Oscar: in MS. Collect. communicated to the Committee, by Ronald M'Donald, Esq. of Staffa.

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THE Mistakes which have been noticed are but a few of what the Poem of URNIGH OSSIAN contains. Nor are the other poems in the collection more exempt from error. Two instances to be taken from the first of these which is entitled *Ossian agus an Clerich* will suffice.

Stanza 26. " Se huirt an Tosgar bu mhor Brigh
" Diongamsa Riogh Inse-Tore
" S Cinn a Dha chomhirlich dheig
" Leig faoi 'm choimhir fein an coisg."

Translated, " Then says Oscar of mighty strength, ' Give " me the King of Inistore [*the Island of Wild Boars*;] his " twelve nobles have a sweet voice, leave me to quell " them."

The actual signification of Inse-Tore, or rather Inse toir, is *of the eastern Isle*; but the translator seems to have read it, as it was probably recited, Inse-torc, which means, *of the island of boars*.

Cinn a dha chomhirlich dheig, signifies the *heads of his twelve counsellors*. The erroneous translation appears to have proceeded from the translator's taking Cinn, *heads*, for binn, *sweet of voice*, or *musical*, and not understanding the meaning of chomhirlich, *counsellors*.

Stanza 31. *l.* 3. " Meirg Riogh Lochlan an aigh" is translated " the iron King of Lochlin," instead of *the standard of Lochlin's auspicious King*.

It is not without regret that I have observed the Enquiry of a writer possessed of learning, ingenuity, and candour, thus teeming with errors; which proceeded in part from his being an entire stranger to the language in which the poems he sought after were composed, and were, in part, owing to the ignorance of his scribes and translators,

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or the sportive humour of his informers. I must also consider it as unfortunate, that Mr. Hill should have thought it requisite for the success of his undetaking, "to assume "the character of a profest author, zealous to defend the "honour of Ossian and Mr Macpherson." For of such as could recite the poems, many did not know that Mr Macpherson ever had a being. And, with respect to the honour of Ossian, so inveterate a hold has it taken of all the speakers of Gaelic in Scotland, that they regard the defaming of it to be as idle, as the defending of it is unnecessary. Were all of them even capable, as but few of them are, of understanding the language of Mr. Hill, or of rating the value of his eloquence, they could be reduced to no other conclusion than this,

"Non tali auxilio nec defensoribus istis
"Oisen eget."

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No. X.

LETTERS FROM MR. JAMES M'PHERSON,

1. To the Rev. Mr. JAMES M'LAGAN, then Minister of *Amalrie*, now of *Blair in Athol*, dated Ruthven, 27th October 1760.

REVEREND SIR,

You perhaps have heard, that I am employed to make a collection of the ancient Poetry in the Gaelic. I have already traversed most of the Isles, and gathered all worth notice in that quarter.—I intend a journey to Mull and the coast of Argyle, to enlarge my collection.

By letters from Edinburgh, as well as gentlemen of your acquaintance, I am informed, that you have a good collection of poems of the kind I want.—It would be, therefore, very obliging, you should transmit me them as soon as convenient, that my book might be rendered more complete, and more for the honour of our old poetry—Traditions are uncertain; poetry delivered down from memory, must lose considerably; and it is a matter of surprise to

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me, how we have now any of the beauties of our ancient Gaelic poetry remaining.

Your collection, I am informed, is pure, as you have taken pains to restore the style—I shall not make any apology for this trouble, as it will be for the honour of our ancestors, how many of their pieces of genius will be brought to light—*I have met with a number of old manuscripts in my travels; the poetical part of them I have endeavoured to secure.*

If any of that kind falls within your hearing, I beg it of you, to have them in sight.

I shall probably do myself the pleasure of waiting of you before I return to Edinburgh. Your correspondence in the mean time, will be very agreeable.—You will excuse this trouble from an entire stranger; and believe me,

Reverend Sir,

Your most humble Servant,

(Signed) JAMES M'PHERSON.

Inform me of what you can of the tradition of the poems: Direct to me, by Edinburgh and Ruthven, inclosed to Mr. M'Pherson, postmaster here.

2. TO THE REV. MR. M'LAGAN, dated Edinburgh, 16th January 1761.

REV. SIR,

I was favoured with your letter inclosing the Gaelic Poems, for which I hold myself extremely obliged to you. *Duan a Ghairibh* is less poetical and more obscure than *Teantach mor na Feine.* The last is far from being a bad poem, were it complete, and is particularly valuable for the ancient manners it contains.—I shall reckon myself

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much obliged to you, for any other pieces you can send me: It is true, I have the most of them from other hands, but the misfortune is, that I find none expert in the Irish orthography, so that an obscure poem is rendered doubly so, by their uncouth way of spelling.—It would have given me real pleasure to have got your letter before I left the Highlands, as in that case, I would have done myself the pleasure of waiting of you, but I do not despair but something may soon cast up, that may bring about an interview; as I have some thoughts of making a jaunt to Perthshire. Be that, however, as it will, I shall be always glad of your correspondence; and hope that you will give me all convenient assistance in my present undertaking.

I have been lucky enough to lay my hands on a pretty complete poem, and truly epic, concerning Fingal.—The antiquity of it is easily ascertained, and it is not only superior to any thing in that language, but reckoned not inferior to the more polite performances of other nations in that way.—I have some thoughts of publishing the original, if it will not clog the work too much.

I shall be always ready to acknowledge the obligation you have laid upon me, and promise I will not be ungrateful for further favours.—It would give me pleasure to know how I can serve you, as I am,

Reverend Sir,

Your most humble and obedient Servant,

(Signed) JAMES M'PHERSON.

Please to send me your proper direction. I send this inclosed to Mr. John Bisset at Perth.—A letter will find me by the care of Mr. Charles Malcom clerk in the Post-office, or Mr. Donaldson's bookseller.

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3. To the Rev. Mr. M'LAGAN, dated Edinburgh, 8th February 1761.

REVD. SIR,

I am favoured with your last letter, inclosing four poems, for which I am much obliged to you. I beg you send me what more you can conveniently. I have resolved to print by subscription.—I send, inclosed, a copy of my proposals, that if any in your neighbourhood incline to subscribe, they send their orders, by your means to me, and I shall send signed receipts, and take care to convey the book when published. I am now much hurried, so that I have scarce time to thank you for your readiness to answer my demands: I wish it may be in my power to show how much I am,

Reverend Sir,

Your most humble Servant,

(Signed) JAMES M'PHERSON.

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No. XI.

SPECIMENS

OF MR. M'PHERSON'S JUVENILE POETRY.

1. *Extract from a Poem* ON DEATH.

O DISCORD! gnashing fury! rav'nous fiend!
Hell's sharpest torment! nauseous qualm of life!
You bathe the poniard oft in friendship's breast:
Peace, virtue, friendship, harmony and love,
Delightful train of graces, shrink from thee;
Vice, envy, villany, deceitful thoughts,
Blood-thirsty cruelty; insatiate pride,
War, woe of mothers and new-married maids,
Attend thy shrine, and thence long-plighted leagues
And unity are broke, thence streams of blood
Flow from the patriot's honest-thinking heart;
And rapine, bloodshed, carnage-train of death,
Resistless, restless, tear th'unhappy world

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Fly, fly, foul fiend, and leave the mangled world
Too long thy prey, ah me! shall hapless man
For ever, ever feel thy iron rod?
Come, Peace, come, life-befriending, lovely fair,
A thousand graces 'tend thy placid reign;
Stretch thy soft pinions o'er a happy world
Draw the sharp weapon from the warrior's hand,
And chace the jarring monster down to hell.—
Let Science raise on high her drooping head,
And Muses tune the soul-delighting lay.—
In vain the poet glides in melting streams,
In vain attunes his soul to tuneful woe;
Deaf is the ear of Discord, dim the eye
Of war, and happiness far flies from earth.
Come, Contemplation, then, my lonely fair,
Solemnly walking, unaffected grace!
Absorpt from life, I join thy sable train,
And turn my aching eye from dismal war.

---

2. *Extract from Canto IV.*

And now the war-inciting clarions sound
And neighing coursers paw the trembling ground;
At once they move majestically slow
To pour their headlong force upon the foe,
Then stop; and awful, solemn silence reigns
Along the sable walls and frowning plains;
When wrapt in all the majesty of state,
Adorn'd with all the honours of the great,
The king resplendent on his royal car,
Shines awful on the iron front of war:

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He stood, then stretch'd his sceptre, all around
Hang in attention to the grateful sound;
Down tow'rds the dust he bends his reverend head,
And to th' Almighty supplicating pray'd;
O Great Unknown, O all-creating Mind,
In greatness lost; almighty unconfin'd
To space or time, whose mighty hand informs,
The rattling tempests and the sable storms,
Absorpt in light, O Vast Infinitude!
Incomprehensible! supremely Good;
Attend, O Heav'nly! from thy glory hear,
And to a dust-form'd worm incline thy ear,
String the firm arm, and teach the hand to fight,
Confound the proud that strut in mortal might,
All owns thy sway, and at thy great command
Success attends the weak and feeble hand.—
Thus said, the devout monarch suppliant bow'd,
And muttering prayers ran along the crowd.
In dazzling arms the chiefs terrific shine,
Glide thro the ranks, and form the lengthen'd line,
While from th' imbattled foe a hero strode
A coat-of-mail hangs from his shoulders broad;
On his high-tow'ring head eventful wav'd
A crested helmet that the sabre brav'd;
On his left hand he bears a spacious shield,
Glitt'ring with iron terror o'er the field:
And in his right he waves the shining blade:
He greatly stood, and thus provoking said,
Ye Scots, ye nation full of fraud and guile,
Ye mean descendants of a barren soil,
Let one advance (the bravest I demand)
And form a victim to my conquering hand.
Forget your fears, your wonted fears controul,
Let fate enlarge the ever-little soul.—

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He said, and rage in tickling poison ran
Thro' ev'ry soul, and stung each gen'rous man.
The hunter heard, rage sparkled from his eyes,
And from his inmost soul the hero sighs,
Then thus indignant spoke, Ah! glory gone?
Ah antient virtue, now for ever flown!
What blessed corner does thy godhead rest?
No more you swell the gen'rous Scottish breast.
When thus, O Scotland, Saxons dare deride,
Thy steel-clad warriors ranged side by side.
I can no more; my panting vitals swell,
I'll give thee glory, or thy soul to hell.
Then tow'rds the foe the youth indignant moves,
Fear trembles, en'mies praise, and envy loves.
He strides along the men-inviron'd ground,
His rattling arms emit an iron sound.
The Saxon saw, advanc'd, nor look'd behind,
Fate hurried on, and courage steel'd his mind;
Bright in effulgent arms the youths appear'd,
Each o'er the plain a steely column rear'd,
They rush together, clashing arms afar
Reflect the horrors of the dismal war;
Awful the blades wave gleaming in the sky,
And from the crashing steel the sparkles fly.—
They fight, and wearied cease, and fight again,
Their feet bake dust with blood upon the plain.
Death undetermin'd, points to each his stings,
And conquest flutters round on dubious wings.
The hill-born youth reminds with anxious care,
What vaunts the foul-mouth'd Saxon breath'd on air.
His country's love the youthful hero warms,
And vengeance strung his almost wearied arms,
Uprais'd aloft the light-reflexive blade,
Sings thro' the air, and cleaves the Saxon head,

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The broken skull and shiver'd helmet strow'd,
The sandy plain that reeks with human blood;
He gasping falls, and shakes the thund'ring ground,
And dying, toss'd his quiv'ring limbs around.—
Thus falls an oak that long majestic stood
The tallest honours of the waving wood.
Deep-hack'd by the ship-wright's unerring hand,
Groans, slow-inclines, and falling, shakes the land.

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No. XII.

SPECIMEN

OF THE ORIGINAL OF CARRICTHURA,

WITH MR. M'PHERSON'S TRANSLATION, AND

A LITERAL LATIN VERSION BY MR. R. M'FARLANE.

Dh' éirich maduinn a' soills' o'n ear
Bu ghorm air an lear an tonn.
Ghairm an righ a shiuil gu crann;
Thàinig gaoth a nall o'n chruaich;
Dh' éirich Innisthorc gu mall,
Is Carraigthùra iuil nan stuadh.
Bha comhara beud gu h-ard,
Teine dall 's a thaobh san smùid.
Bhuail an righ a chliabh air ball;
Gun dàil bha 'gharbh shleagh o 'chùl;
Chunnaic e gun chlith a' ghaoth;
Bha 'leadan air a chùl a' strì;
Cha robh sàmhchair an righ faoin.
Thuit oidhch' air Rotha nan stuadh;
Ghabh cala nan cruach an long;
Bha carraig mu iomall a' chuain;
Dh' aom coille thar fuaim nan tonn.
Air mullach bha crom chruth Loduinn,
Is clacha mòr nan iomadh buadh;
Air lòsal bha raon gun mhòrchùis,

Morning rose in the east; the blue waters rolled in light. Fingal bade his sails to rise; the winds came rustling from their hills. Inistore rose to sight, and Carricthura's mossy towers. But the sign of distress was on their top: the warning flame edged with smoke. The King of Morven struck his breast: he assumed, at once his spear. His

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Surrexit matutinus (radius) elucens ex oriente;
Erat caeruleus super aequore fluctus.
Vocavit rex sua vela ad (malum) arborem;
Venit ventus huc ab praecipitio;
Surrexit Innistorca lentè,
Et Carricthura dux undarum.
Erant signa maleficii in altò,
Ignis coecus et ejus latus in fumo.
Percussit rex suum pectus è vestigio;
Sine mora fuit ejus crassa hasta ab ejus tergo;
Vidit ille sine vi ventum;
Erant ejus crines super ejus tergo certantes;
Non erat silentium regis vanum.
Cecidit nox super Rotham undarum;
Cepit portus tumulorum navem;
Erat rupes circa extremum oceani;
Inclinabatur silva super sonitum fluctuum.
Super culmine erat circus formae Lodinis,
Et saxa magna plurimarum virtutum;
Super (plano) humili erat campus sine magnitudine,

---

darkened brow bends forward to the coast: he looks back to the lagging winds. His hair is disordered on his back. The silence of the king is terrible!

Night came down on the sea; Rotha's bay received the ship. A rock bends along the coast with all its echoing wood. On the top is the circle of Loda, the mossy stone of power! A narrow plain spreads beneath, covered with

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Agus feur is craobh ri cuan;
Craobh a bhuain a' ghaoth, 's i ard,
O iomall nan carn gu raon.
Bha gorm-shiubhal nan srutha thall,
Is osag mhall o chuan bha faoin.
Dh' éirich gath o dharaig liath;
Bha fleagh nan triath air an fhsaoch;
Bha bròn air anam righ nan sgiath
Mu cheannard charraig chiar nan laoch.
Dh' éirich ré gu mall is fann;
Thuit suain nach gann mu cheann nan triath;
Bha 'n clogaide a' boillsgeadh thall;
Bha 'n teine call a neart san t-sliabh.
Cha robh cadal mu shùil an righ;
Dh' éirich e am fòrum a chruaidh,
A shealladh air carraig nan stuadh.
Dh' íslich teine fada thall,
A' ghealach dearg is mall san ear.
Thàinig osna nuas o'n charn;
Air an sgiathaibh bha sàmhla fear,

---

grass and aged trees which the midnight winds, in their wrath, had torn from the shaggy rock. The blue course of a stream is there: the lonely blast of ocean pursues the thistle's beard. The flame of three oaks arose: the feast is spread around: but the soul of the king is sad for Carricthura's chief distrest.

The wan, cold moon rose, in the east. Sleep descended

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Et gramen et arbor juxta oceanum;
Arbor quam avulsit ventus, (cum esset altus) atque eo
Ab extremo saxetorum ad planitiem. [alto,
Erat caeruleus cursus rivorum ex adverso,
Et aura lenta ab oceano qui erat (tranquillus) inanis.
Surrexit radius (lucis) à quercu canâ;
Erat epulum heroum super ericâ;
Erat dolor super animo regis clypeorum
Ob (ducem summum) caput altum rupis fuscae bellato-
Surrexit luna lentè et languidè; [rum.
Cecidit sopor haud parcus circa caput heroum;
Erant eorum galeae splendentes ex adverso;
Erat ignis amittens suas vires in clivo.
Haud erat somnus circa oculum regis;
Surrexit ille in strepitu suae duae armaturae,
Ejus prospectu (verso) super rupem fluctuum.
Subsedit ignis procul ex adverso,
Lunâ rutilâ et lentâ in oriente.
Venerunt flamina deorsum ab saxeto;
Super eorum alis erat simulacrum viri,

on the youths. Their blue helmets glitter to the beam; the fading fire decays. But sleep did not rest on the king: he rose in the midst of his arms, and slowly ascended the hill, to behold the flame of Sarno's tower.

The flame was dim and distant; the moon hid her red face in the east. A blast came from the mountain, on its wings was the spirit of Loda. He came to his place in

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Cruth Loduinn san lear gun tuar.
Thàinig e gu 'chòmhnuidh féin,
A dhubh shleagh gun fheum 'na làimh,
A dhearg shùil mar theine nan speur,
Mar thorrunn an t-sléibh' a ghuth
An dùbhra dubh fada thall.
Thog Fionnghal san oidhch' a shleagh;
Chualas anns a' mhagh a ghairm.
A mhic na h-oidhche, o mo thaobh;
Gabh a' ghaoth agus bi falbh!
C'uim thigeadh tu m' fhianuis, fhir fhaoin,
Do shàmhla cho baoth ri d' àirm?
An eagal dhomhsa do chruth donn,
Fhuathais nan crom th'aig Loduinn?
'S lag do sgiath 's do nial nach trom,
Do chlaidheamh lom mar theine air mòr-thonn,
Cuiridh osag iads as a chéile,
Agus sgaoilear thu féin gun dàil.
As m' fhianuis, a dhubh-mhic nan speur;
Gairm d'osag dhuit fhein, 's bi falbh!

---

his terrors, and shook his dusky spear. His eyes appear like flames in his dark face; his voice is like distant thunder. Fingal advanced his spear in night, and raised his voice on high.

Son of night, retire: call thy winds and fly! Why dost thou come to my presence with thy shadowy arms! Do I fear thy gloomy form, spirit of dismal Lodo? Weak is

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Forma Lodinis in aequore sine colore.
Venit ille ad habitationem suam ipsius,
Ejus nigrâ hastâ * sine vi in ejus manu,
Ejus rutilo oculo instar ignis coelorum,
Instar tonitrûs clivi ejus voce
In obscuritate atrâ procul ex adverso.
Sustulit Fingal in nocte suam hastam;
Auditus est in campo ejus clamor.
Fili noctis, (absiste) à meo latere;
Capesse ventum et esto abiens!
Quare venias tu in meum conspectum, vir vane,
Tuo simulacro aeque inani ac tua (sunt) arma?
An metus mihi tua forma subfusca,
O larva circorum, qui sunt Lodinis?
Infirmus est tuus clypeus et tua nubes haud gravis,
Tuus gladius nudus (est) instar ignis super magno fluctu.
Mittet flamen ea ex se ipsis, (i. e. disperget ea)
Et dispergeris tu ipse sine morâ.
E meo conspectu, niger fili coelorum;
Voca tuum flamen ad te ipsum, et esto abiens!

---

thy shield of clouds: feeble is that meteor, thy sword! The blast rolls them together; and thou thyself art lost. Fly from my presence, son of night! call thy winds and fly!

* Interpretationis Latinae auctor lectorem monendum censet vocem *existente* vel *existentibus* plerumque subintelligi, ubicunque ponitur ablativus absolutus sine ullo verbi cujusquam participio expresso.

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An cuireadh tu mi féin o m' chrom?
Thuirt an guth trom a's fàsa fuaim.
Dhomhsa dh'aomas feachd nan sonn;
Seallam o m' thom air an t-sluagh,
Is tuitidh iad mar luath nam fhiannis;
O'm anail thig osag a' bhàis.
Thig mi mach gu h-ard air gaoith;
Tha na stoirm a' taomadh shuas,
Mu'm mhala fhuair fo ghruaim gun tuar.
'S ciuin mo chòmhnuidh anns na neoil,
Is taitneach raoin mhòr mo shuain.
Gabhsa còmhnuidh na do raoin,
Thuirt righ nach b'fhaoin, 's a làmh air beirt:
Neo cuimhnich mac Chumhail air raon,
'S lag do thanas;—'s mòr mo neart.
Na ghluais mi mo cheum o'n bheinn
Gu'd thalla féin, air raon is ciuin?
Na thachair mo shleagh am bheil feum,
An truscan nan speur ri guth
Fuathais dhuibh aig crom chruth Loduinn?

Dost thou force me from my place? replied the hollow voice. The people bend before me. I turn the battle in the field of the brave. I look on the nations, and they vanish: my nostrils pour the blast of death. I come abroad on the winds: the tempests are before my face. But my dwelling is calm above the clouds; the fields of my rest are pleasant.

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An mitteres tu me ipsum à meo circo?
Dixit vox gravis cujus erat maxime indistinctus sonus.
Mihi cedunt exercitus heroum;
Despicio de meo tumulo super populum,
Et cadent illi ut cineres in meo conspectu;
E meo halitu venit flamen mortis.
Prodeo ego foras in altum super vento;
Sunt procellae se fundentes supra, [lore.
Circa meum supercilium frigidum sub torvitate sine co-
Est tranquillum meum domicilium in nubibus,
Sunt jucundi campi magni mei soporis.
(Fac) cape commorationem in tuis campis,
Dixit rex qui non erat vanus, et ejus manu super telo:
Sin minus recordare filium Comalis in campo;
Infirmum est tuum spectrum;—est magnum meum robur.
An movi ego meum passum è monte
Ad tuam aulam ipsius, in campo qui est tranquillus?
An occurrit mea hasta in qua est vis,
In amictu coelorum voci
Larvae nigrae ad circum formae Lodinis?

Dwell in thy pleasant fields, said the king: Let Comhal's son be forgot. Do my steps ascend, from my hills, into thy peaceful plains? Do I meet thee, with a spear, on thy cloud, spirit of dismal Loda? Why then dost thou frown on me? why shake thine airy spear? Thou frownest in vain: I never fled from the mighty in war. And shall the sons of the wind frighten the king of

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C'uim thog thu do mhala le gruaim?
C'uim chrathadh tu shuas do shleagh!
'S beag m' eagal ri d' chòmhra, fhir fhaoin.
Cha d' theich mi o shluagh sa mhagh;
C' uim theicheadh o shìol nan gaoth
Sàr ghaisgeach nach faoin, righ Mhòirbheinn?
Cha teich! Tha fhios, gun bhi dall
Air laigse do làimhe an cath.
Teich gu d' thìr, a fhreagair an cruth;
Teich air a' ghaoith dhuibh; bi falbh,
Tha 'n osag an crodhan mo làimhe;
'S leam astar is spairn nan stoirm;
'S e righ na Soruch mo mhac féin;
Tha 'aomadh sa' bheinn dha m' thuar;
Tha a charraid aig carraig nan ceud,
Is cois'nidh gun bheud a' bhuaidh.
Teich gu d' thìr fhèin, a mhic Chumhail,
No fairich gu dubhach m' fhearg.
Thog e gu h-ard a shleagh dhorch';
Dh'aom e gu borb a cheann ard;

Morven? No: he knows the weakness of their arms. Fly to thy land, replied the form: receive the wind, and fly! The blasts are in the hollow of my hand: the course of the storm is mine. The king of Sora is my son, he bends at the stone of my power. His battle is around Carricthura; and he will prevail! Fly to thy land, son of Comhal, or feel my flaming wrath!

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Quare elevâsti tu tuum supercilium cum torvitate!
Quare quasses tu suprà tuam hastam?
Est exiguus meus metus ad tuum sermonem, vir inanis.
Haud fugi ego ab exercitu in acie;
Quare fugiat à semine ventorum
Eximius bellator haud vanus, rex Morvenis?
Haud fugiet! Est illi notitia, si non sit coecus,
De infirmitate tuae manûs in conflictu.
Fuge ad tuam terram, respondit forma;
Fuge super vento atro; esto abiens.
Est flamen in volâ meae manûs;
Sunt mihi iter et vis procellarum;
Est rex Sorae meus filius ipsius;
Est ejus genuflexio in monte ad meam speciem;
Est ejus pugna ad rupem centuriarum,
Et reportabit sine injuriâ victoriam.
Fuge ad tuam terram ipsius, fili Comalis,
Aut experire aterrimè meam iram.
Sustulit ille in altum suam hastam atram;
Inclinavit ille barbarè suum caput arduum;

He lifted high his shadowy spear! he bent forward his dreadful height. Fingal advancing, drew his sword; the blade of dark-brown Luno. The gleaming path of the steel winds through the gloomy ghost. The form fell shapeless into air; like a column of smoke, which the staff of the boy disturbs as it rises from the half-extinguished furnace.

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Ghabh Fionnghal 'na aghaidh le colg,
A chlaidheamh glan gorm 'na làimh;
Mac an Luinn bu chiar-dhubh gruaidh.
Ghluais solus na cruaidhe ro' 'n taibhs',
Fuathas don a' bhàis fo ghruaim.
Thuit esa gun chruth 's e thall,
Air gaoith nan dubh charn; mar smùid
Bhriseas òg, is bioran 'na làimh,
Mu theallach na speirn 's na mùig.
Scread fuathas chruth Loduinn sa' bheinn,
'Ga thional ann féin sa' ghaoith.
Chual' Innis nan torc am fuaim;
Chaisg astar nan stuadh le fiamh;
Dh' éirich gaisgich mhic Chumhail nam buadh;
Bha sleagh 's gach làimh shnas san t-sliabh.
C' àite bheil e? 's am fearg fo ghruaim,
Gach màile ri fuaim m'a thriath.
Thàinig ré a mach san ear;
Thill ceannard nam fear 'na airm;
Bha aoibhneas air oig're san-lear;

The spirit of Loda shrieked, as, rolled into himself, he rose on the wind. Inistore shook at the sound. The waves heard it on the deep. They stopped in their course with fear: the friends of Fingal started at once; and took their heavy spears. They missed the king: they rose in rage; all their arms resound!

The moon came forth in the east. Fingal returned in the

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(Ivit) cepit-viam Fingal adversus ejus faciem cum ferociâ.
Ejus gladio puro caeruleo in ejus manu;
Filio Lunonis cujus erat fusco-atra gena.
Ivit lux duri-gladii per spectrum,
Larvam vilem mortis sub tetritate.
Cecidit illa (larva) sine forma et eâ ex adverso,
Super vento nigrorum saxetorum; ut fumus
Quem rumpit puer, cum bacillo in ejus manu,
Circa caminum luctaminis et atri-vaporis.
Ejulavit larva formae Lodinis in monte,
Se colligens in se ipsam in vento.
Audivit Innistorca (insula aprorum vel cetorum) sonitum;
Cessavit iter undarum prae metu;
Surrexerunt bellatores filii Comalis victoriarum;
Fuit hasta in singulis manibus supra in clivo.
Quo loco est ille? Et eorum irâ sub torvitate,
Et unaquâque loricâ sonante circa suum heroa.
Venit luna foras in oriente;
Rediit summus dux virorum in suis armis;
Fuit laetitia in juventute in aequore;

---

gleam of his arms. The joy of his youth was great; their souls settled as a sea from a storm. Ullin raised the song of gladness. The hills of Inistore rejoiced. The flame of the oak arose; and the tales of heroes are told.

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Shìolaidh 'n anam mar mhuir o stoirm.
Thog Ullin gu subhach an dàn;
Chual' Innis nan carn an ceòl;
Bha lasair o 'n daraig làn;
Chualas sgeul air clann nan seòd.

Subsedit eorum animus sicut mare ex procellis
Elevavit Ullin hilariter carmen;
Audivit insula saxetorum melos;
Fuit flamma è quercu plena;
Audita est historia de prole heroum.

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No. XIII.

CAPTAIN A. MORRISON'S

ANSWERS TO QUERIES,

TRANSMITTED TO HIM FROM THE COMMITTEE OF THE HIGHLAND SOCIETY, RESPECTING OSSIAN'S AND OTHER ANCIENT POEMS.

To 1st,

CAPTAIN MORRISON replies: That before leaving Skye, even from the first of his recollection, he heard repeated, and learnt many poems and songs respecting Fingal, Ossian, and other ancient heroes; many of which were afterwards collected, arranged, and translated, by Mr. James Macpherson.

To 2d, That he gave the Rev. Mr. Mac Kinnon of Glendarual, before he went last time to America, in the year 1780, Ossian's Address to the Sun in the original, which

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being transmitted by Lord Bannatyne and presented, he identifies.

To 3d, That he got the Address among Mr. James Macpherson's original papers, when he was transcribing fairly for him, from these original papers (either collected by himself, or transmitted by his Highland friends,) as it stood in the poem of Carthon, afterwards translated and published.

To 4th, That he can repeat the whole of the poem given Mr. Mac-Kinnon, and give a copy of it in writing.

To 5th, He remembers some pieces or fragments of ancient Gaelic poetry respecting Fingal, Ossian, and other heroes, and gives a few of these as he now recollects them.

To 6th, That Mr. James Macpherson, on his tour through the Highlands and Isles, was a night in his house in Skinnader Skye; was then collecting the ancient poems, but when in his house, had only a few of them: that he gave him (Captain Morrison) some, which he afterwards translated and published; together with fingalian or old heroic poems, not published in his translations, one of them Dargo. That afterwards in London, he had access to Mr. Macpherson's papers; saw the several manuscripts, which he translated in different hand-writings, some of them in his own hand, some not, as they were either gathered by himself, or sent him, from his friends in the Highlands, some of them taken from oral recitation, some from MSS. —That he does not now remember all the persons, who recited or sent them; because he could have no doubt regarding the poems he was accustomed to hear from his infancy: is certain, that Mr. Macpherson got some of them from the Macvurichs in Uist, and some from Mull, likely from the Fletchers of Glenforsa, fa-

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mous for a long time, for the recitation and history of such poems.

To 7th and following Queries. That he saw many MSS. in the old Gaelic character with Mr. Macpherson, containing some of the poems translated, which MSS. they found difficult to read: That he heard of such being in the country, and given him: Is of opinion, that Mr. Donald MacQueen, minister of Trotterness, Skye, a good Gaelic scholar, gave some of them: How old the MSS. were cannot say; but from the character and spelling seemed very ancient.

General Observations by Capt. Morison on the foregoing Subject.

—WAS intimately acquainted with Mr. James Macpherson's abilities and knowledge of the Gaelic language: Admits he had much merit, in collecting, and arranging, and translating; but that he was no great poet, nor thoroughly conversant in Gaelic literature; So far from composing such poems as were translated, that he assisted him often in understanding some words, and suggested some improvements: That he could as well compose the Prophecies of Isaiah, or create the Island of Skye, as compose a Poem like one of Ossian's: That there are many other such poems, which Mr. Macpherson did not collect, and collected some which he did not translate; but made his choice with proper taste: That the Address to the Sun in the Poem of Carthon, wanted two lines in the original, which neither Mr. Macpherson, nor any body else, could supply, nay supply any thing like them.

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Capt. Morison adds farther, That amidst all the poetry, he saw or heard, he could as easily distinguish Ossian's from that of others, by specific marks, as he could Virgil's from Ovid or Horace.

That the poetry of the Highlands can be traced back many hundred years; and every species, as well as every period, distinguished from one another: So that no difficulty can remain in assigning Ossian his own station and æra.

Greenock, 7th Jan. 1801.

In the above Replies to the Questions of the Honourable the Highland Society of Scotland, respecting the Poems of Ossian, and other ancient Poems relative to Fingal and other ancient Heroes; and in these General Observations, I declare what I know to be true, and now aver the same before these gentlemen, Mr. Donald Martin merchant, and Mr. Donald Shaw ship-chandler, Greenock: As also, that I have given the Rev. Mr. Irvine a true and faithful copy of Ossian's Address to the Sun in the original, and some other fragments of Ossian's Poems. Witness whereof,

ALEX. MORISON.

D. Martin, witness,
Don. Shaw, witness.

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No. XIV.

PASSAGES OF THE ORIGINAL OF GAUL,

From Dr. SMITH's *Sean Dana*; together with LEABA GHUILL: Received by the Committee from the Rev. Mr. M'Diarmid.

NACH tiamhaidh tosd so na hòiche,
'S i taosgadh a dui'-neoil air gleantai'!
Dh' aom suain air iuran na seilge
Air an raon, 's a chù r'a ghlùn.
Clanna nan sliabh tha e ruaga'
Na aisling, 's a shuain ga threigsinn.

Caidlibh, a chlanna an sgios,
'S gach reul a' dìreadh nan aonach;
Caidil a lù'-chein luaith,
Cha dean Oisian do shuain a dhùsga'.
Tha mise ri faireadh am aonar,
Is caomh leam doille na hòiche;

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'S mi 'g imeachd o ghleannan gu gleannan,
Gun fhiughair ri madain no soillse.

Caomhainn do sholus, a Ghrian,
'S na caith co dian do lochrain;
Mar righ na Feinne, 's faoilidh tanam,
Ach crionaidh fathasd do mhòr-chuis.
Caomhainn lochrain nam mìle lasair,
Ad ghorm-thalla, nuair theid thu
Fo d'chiar-dhorsaibh, gu cadal
Fo asgailt dhorcha na hiargail.
Cao'inn iad mu'n fàg iad thu taonar,
Amhuil mise, gun aon is blà leam:
Cao'inn iad, gun laoch a' faicinn
Gorm-lasair nan lochran aillidh.

A Chaothain nan solus aigh,
Tha do lochrains' an tràsa fo smal;
Amhuil darag air criona gu luath
Tha do phaillinn, 's do shluagh air treigsinn.
Soir na siar air aghaidh taonaich
Cho 'n fhaighear do aon diu ach làrach;
An Seallama, 'n Taura no 'n Tigh-mor-ri'
Cha 'n 'eil slige, no oran, no clarsach!
Tha iad uile nan tulachain uaine,
'S an clacha nan cluainibh fein,
Cha 'n fhaic aineal o'n lear no o'n fhàsaich
A haon diu 's a bharr ro neul.

'S a Sheallama, theach mo ghaoil!
An e 'n torr so taos-larach,
Far am bheil foghnan, fraoch, is fòlach,
Ri bròn fo shile' na hòiche?
Mu thimchioll mo ghlas-chiabhan
Ag iadha' tha chomhachag chorr,

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'S an earbag a' clisgeadh o leabuidh,
Gun eagal ro Oisiain a bhròin.

Earbag nan carn còsach,
San robh cònuidh Oscair is Fhinn,
Cha 'n imir mi fein ort beud,
'S cha reubar thu choidh' le m' lainn.—
Gu druim Sheallama sìneam mo lamh;
Tha 'n fhardach gun druim ach adhar!
Iarram an sgia leathan gu hiosal;
Barr mo shleagh bhuail a copan!—
'S a chopain èigheach nam blàr!
Is sàr-aoibhinn leom fathasd tfhuaim,
Tha e dùsga' nan làithe chaidh seach,
'S a dh' aindeoin aois tha m' anam a' leumnaich.—
Ach uam smuainte nam blàr,
'S mo shleagh air fàs na luirg;
An sgia chopach tuille cha bhuail i;
Ach ciod so 'n fhuaim a dhuisg i?
Bloidh sgeith' air a caithe' le haois!
Mar ghealach earr-dhubh a cruth.

Sgia Ghuill 's i a t' ann,
Sgia chòlain mo dheagh Oscair!—
Ach ciod so chuir m' anam fo sprochd?
'S tric, Oscair, a fhuair-sa do chliu;
Air còlan do ghaoil bidh fonn an tràs,
A Mhal-mhine le d' chlàr bi dlù.—*

* * *

Air long ea-trom nan garbh-thonn
Lean an sonn sinn an dara-mhaireach.

Ach co sud air a charraig, mar cheo,
'S i 'g amharc ro dheoir air Goll,

* Sean Dana—Tiomna Ghuill, 4to, p. 20.

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A gruag dhorcha sa ghaoith air faondra,
'S a lamh chaoin, mar cobhar, m'a cuailean?
'S òg am macan na huchd,
'S binn a crònan na chluais:
Ach shèid an osnagh am fonn;
Air Goll, Aoibhir-chaomh tha do luadh! †

* * *

—A Mhorna, seall orm o'n aonach.
Bha tanam fein mar steud-shruth bras
Fo chobhar ceann-gheal an caing garbhlaich;
'S mac-samhuil sin anam do mhic.

—Aoibhir-chaomha! Og'aill!—
Ach ni 'm buin dearsanna caomh do 'n doimhin.
Tha anam Ghuill an collainn a chòraig.
—'S truagh gun Oisian mac Fhinn
Bhi leam, mar an linn Mhic Nuath!
—Ach tha m'anam fein na thannas èiti'
'S e leum na aonar sa chuan atmhor,
A' taoma' mìle tonn air eilean air chrith,
'S a' marcachd a rìs an cobhan na gaoithe. ‡

* * *

Ciod so chum thu, ghraidh,
Seach càch an I na freoine?
Mise dubhach air aoma chreag,
'S mac-thallaidh a' freagairt dom' chòra.
—Nach feuda tu pilleadh a nis
Ge d' thigeadh ort ànra cuain,
Is tuigh bhi ri leanabh do ghaoil
A thaomas leam osna gu cruaidh.
'S truagh nach cluine' tu, ghaoil,
Fuaim bhristeach tainme

† Ibid. p. 25. ‡ Ibid. p. 28.

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O bheul Oguill, gu d' ghreasad:
Ach 's eagal leam fein nach pill thu. *

* * *

Mar cholum an carraig na h Ulacha,
'S i solar dhearca da hàl beag,
'S a' pilltin gu tric, gun am blasad i fein,
Tra dh' eireas an tseabhag na smuainte;
B' amhuil a phill tri uaire 'n Aoibhir,
'S a hanam mar thuinn air a luasga'
Bho bhàir gu bàir, 's an doinionn a' seide',
Tra chual i guth bròin o ghéig na tràgha. †

* * *

Thogas a chlogaid; chunnas a chiabhan,
Na 'n ànra fiar am fallas.—
Dh' eirich mo bhùirich fein,
'S thog esan air eigin a shuil
Thaini' 'n teug, mar smal na greine;
Tuille cha leir dhuit tOscar!

Tha àilleachd Aoibheir-chaomha fo smal,
'S barr sleagh aig a mac gun smuairean,
B' fhann a guth; bu tearc a ràite,
Thogas fein le m' laimh asuas i:
Ach leag i mo bhos air ceann a mic,
'S a hacain gu tric ag eiridh. ‡

* * *

Càiribh, a chlanna nan teud,
Leaba Ghuill 's a dheo-greine là ris;
Far am faicear innis o chein
Is geugan os aird ga sgàile'.
Fo sgèi na daraig is guirme blà,
Is luaithe fàs, 's is buaine dreach,
A bhrùchdas a duilleach air anail na frois,

* Ibid. p. 30. † Ibid. p. 32. ‡ Ibid. p. 36.

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'S an raon m'an cuairt dì seargta.
—A duilleach o iomall na tìre,
Chìtear le eoin an tsamhraidh;
Is luidhidh gach eun mar a thig
Air barraibh † na géige urair.
Cluinnidh Goll an ceilear na cheo,
'S oighean a' seinn air Aoibhir-chaomha:
'S gus an caochail gach ni dhiu so,
Cha sgarar ur cuimhne bho chèile.
—Gus an crion gu luaithre a chlach,
'S an searg as le haois a gheug so,
Gus an sguir na sruthain a ruith,
'S an dèagh mathair-uisge nan sleibhtean;
Gus an caillear an dilinn aois
Gach filidh, 's dàn is aobhar sgéil;
Cha'n fheoruich an taineal "Co mac Morna?
"No Cia i cònuidh ‡ Ghuill nan lù-chon*?"

LEABA GHUILL. From Mr. M'Diarmid.

O! Càiribh, a chlanna nan tèud,
Leaba Ghuill, 's a dheo-grèine laimh ris,
Far an comharraichear a leaba an cèin,
Ge d' robh gèuga arda 'ga sgàile;
Fo sgèith na daraig a's guirme blàth,
Is luaithe fàs, 's is buaine dreach
A bhrùchdas a duilleach air anail na frois
'S an raon mu'n cuairt dhi seargta.
A duilleach o iomall gach tìre
Chitear le eoin an tsamhruidh
'S luidhidh gach èun, mar a thig,
Air barraibh Gèige na Strumoin.
Cluinnidh Goll an ceileir 'na cheò,
'S oighean a seinn air Eibhir-chaomha,

* Ibid. p. 38.

† *al.* geige na Strumhoin. ‡ *al.* Righ na Strumhoin.

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'S gus an caochail gach ni dhiubh so
Cha sgarar bhur cuimhne o chèile.
Gus an crion gu luaithre a chlach
'S gus an searg as le aois a Ghèug so,
Gus an sguir na sruthain a ruith
'S gus an dèibh mathair-uisge nan sleibhte,
Gus an caillear san dìlinn, aois
Gach Filidh, 's dàn, a's aobhar sgèil
Cha'n fheoruich an taineal, Co mac Moirne,
No c' àite 'n comhnuidh Riogh na Strumoin.

3. ORIGINAL OF OSSIAN'S ADDRESS TO THE SUN IN CARTHON. From the same.

O! 'Usa fhéin a shiùbhlas shuas
Cruinn mar làn sciath chruaidh nan triath,
C'as tha do dhearsa gu'n ghruaim,
Do sholus ata buan, a Ghrian?
Thig thu 'na d' àileadh thrèin,
Is faluichidh Rèil an triall,
l. 7. Theid Gealach gun tuar o'n spèur
'G a cleath fèin fo stuaigh san Iar.
Tha 'Us' ann a d' astar amhàin,
Co tha dàna bhi na d chòir?
Tuitidh darag o'n chruaich aird,
Tuitidh earn fo aois a's scorr;
Tràighidh a's lionaidh an Cuan,
l. 14. Caillear shuas an Rè san spèur;
Thusa d' aon a chaoi fo bhuaidh
An aobhneas do sholuis fèin.
'Nuair a dhubhas m'an domhans toirm,
Le Torrunn borb, a's dealan bearth'
Sealaidh tu 'n a d'àil' o'n toirm
Fiamh Gáire am bruailean nan spèur!

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Dhomhsa tha do sholus faoin,
'S nach faic mi a chaoi do ghnùis!
Sgaoleadh Cùl us òrbhui' ciabh
Air aghaidh nan Nial san Ear
No 'nuair chritheas ann san Iar
*l.*26. Aig do dhorsaibh ciar air lear.
'S maith dh' fheudta gum bheil thu 's mise fèin
'S an am gu trèun, 's gu'n fhèim ann am,
Ar bhadhnaidh a tearna o'a spèur
A siubhal le chèile gu 'n ceann.
Biodh Aoibhneas ort fein, a Ghrian!
'S tu neartmhor, a Thriath, a' d' oige,
*l.*33. 'S dorcha, mi-thaitneach an Aois,
Mar sholus faoin an Rè gun chàil,
'S i sealtuinn o neòil air an raon,
'S an liath-cheò air thaobh nan carn,
An ossag o thuath air an rèth;
Fear siubhail fo bhèud, 's è mall.

Capt. Morrison's copy of the above Address to the Sun differs only in the 7th, 14th, 26th, 33d, 34th, and 35th lines, which in Capt. Morrison's are as under:

l. 7. A ghealach ga dubhadh san speur.

14. Falaichear shuas an reul san speur,

26. Le do dheirse ciar ar lear.

33. Is bronach mi-thaitneach an aois
34. Mar ghealaich fhaoin san speur
35. A raith fo neul ar a raon.

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4. ORIGINAL OF THE ADDRESS TO THE SUN IN CARRICTHURA.
From the same.

An d' fhag thu gorm astar nan speur,
A mhic gu'n bhéud is òrbhui ciabh,
Tha deirse na h-oiche dhuit féin,
Agus pàlluinn do chlos san Iar.
Thig na stuaigh mu'n cuairt gu mall
A choimhead an fhir a's gloine gruaidh,
A togail fo eagal an ceann;
Re d'fhaicinn co-àille a' d' shuain
Theich iadsa gu'n tuar o d' thaobh.
Gabhsa cadal 'n a do chòs,
A Ghrian! a's pill an tòs le aoibhneas.

5. EXTRACT FROM THE ORIGINAL OF FINAN AND LORMA,
in Dr. SMITH's *Sean Dana*.

"Tha 'n taonach, a bhaird, ro-gheal,
Is faileas na rè air Caothan,
Taibhsean an tsleibh a' labhairt,
'S guth thannas an luib na gaoithe.
Ach 's caochla cruth am bheil ar beachd,
Da dhuisneul am feachd na h-òiche;
Ta 'n imeachd air Albha nam boc,
'S an ciabha clearc air osunn an aonaich.
Le aon diu' doilleir tha dhà chù,
'S a bhogha iughrach dorch' air lagh,

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Bho shlios na hòigh tha sruthan daithte,
A falluing dearg 's a haghaidh brònach."

Cum air tais, a ghaoth,
Gus am faic sinn aogas na deise,
Na sguab ad sgiobul araon iad,
'S na sgap air faondra' am maise.
—Thar ghleann na luachrach 's cruaidh nan èilde,
Ta 'n leumnaich feadh ànraidh a cheo;
A bhaird aosda nan linn a thrèig,
Co iad ri am dhoibh bhi beo?

'S phill na blia'naidh a bha;
Tha m' anamsa làn d' an ceol,
Mar chaoiran thonn a bhios an céiñ
Ri uair shaimhe, ta 'n ceum do m' chòir.
—A chlanna Mhuirne, 's caomh leam ur dàn,
Is cian fhuaim o chlaraibh Sheallama*.

* Sean Dana—Dan Clainne Mhuirne, 4to, p. 60.

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No. XV.

PASSAGES

EXTRACTED FROM

ANCIENT GAELIC POEMS,

IN THE POSSESSION OF THE COMMITTEE;

WITH

A LITERAL TRANSLATION,

BY DR. DONALD SMITH;

compared with Parts of the EPIC POEM OF FINGAL,

As published by MR. M'PHERSON.

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Daol a bha faire na tuinne
Ar an èirgheadh buinnean arda,
Ghluais gu luath dhairis mar tharla (*a*).
" Eirigh, a righ na Teamhra!
Chi mi loingeas mor, se labhram,
Lomlan nan cuan is e clannach
Do loingeas mor nan allamharach.
Ma se an Garbh * mac Stàirn a ta ann,
Ondhreag uamhara ro gharg,
Bheir e leis ar gèill thar muir,
Do aindeoin righ fear foinneamh (*b*)."
" 'S breugach thu an diu 's gach aon uair;
Se ta ann loingeas na mach,
Is an Fhiann'a teachd birt dar cobhair (*c*)."
" Gum be sud am fear madhant,
Is e na stuaigh alla mara chugain (*d*).
Chite an laoch mar aiteal céo (*e*),
B'amhail is crann giusaich [a mhòid] (*f*)
Ann an còrag nan cathan dlùth
Mar am feur fu an ostig chiuin (*g*).

—The scout of Ocean comes, Moran the son of Fithil! " Arise," says the youth, " Cuthullin, arise; I see the ships of the north! Many, chief of men, are the foe. Many the heroes of the sea-borne Swaran."

* An Garbh, *the thick, rough,* or *rugged,* is the name or, rather, epithet, of the king of Lochlin, who came to invade Ireland. In the Preface to Mr. Macpherson's Translation of *Fragments of Ancient Poetry*, the Garve of his text is called Swarthan, which he afterwards changed to Swaran, as he did Cuchulaid to Cuthullin. Swarthan appears to be of Teuton origin, derived from *Swart, Sveart, Sveartan,* or *Svarti,* signifying black in Swedish, Saxon, and Icelandic. It was equally the custom of the Caledonians and the

(*a*) Kenn. p. 78. st. 8. (*b*) Flet. p. 183. st. 1, 13. (*c*) Flet. st. 2.
(*d*) Mr. M'Lag. p. 91. l. s. 3. (*e*) Kenn. p. 154. st. (*f*) Id. p. 190. st. 5.
(*g*) Id. p. 154. st. 3.

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Daol, who was watching the ocean
When high heaved its billows,
Hastened to relate what occurred.
"Arise, King of Taura!
I see a great fleet; I proclaim
That our harbours are covered with crowds
From the mighty fleet of the sea-borne foe.
If this be the Garve, the son of Starno,
That terrible meteor destructive in its course,
He shall bear our captives over sea,
Nor can the king of full-grown warriors prevent him."
"Thou art deceived to-day, as thou always art;
It is the fleet of the hills that is there,
And the heroes of Fingal coming to our aid."
"Their chief dexterous in arms,
Is a rock bending over our shore.
I beheld the hero like a spreading mist.
[Tall] he seemed as a pine of the forest,
In the array of the hosts, close waving
Like the grass that is moved by the gentle breeze.

"Moran!" replied the blue-eyed chief, "thou ever tremblest, son of Fithil! Thy fears have increased the foe. It is Fingal, king of desarts, with aid to green Erin of "streams."

"I beheld their chief" says Moran, "tall as a glittering rock. His spear is a blasted pine.—He sat on the shore! like a cloud of mist on the silent hill!

"Many, chief of heroes! I said, many are our hands of war. Well art thou named the Mighty Man: but ma-

northern nations to distinguish persons by descriptive epithets. The Norwegian Sigurd was named *Digri*, or the Thick. William King of Scots bore the synonymous epithet of *Garbh*; and Canute, who ruled over Denmark, England, and Norway, is known, in the verses of Sighvat his Scald, by the title of *Digri*.

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" Is faoin do bharail, ge ro mhor, *MS.*
A treise do lamh is do chuim,
Gu dean thu re'r là ar turghuin,
Is iomadh laoch a gheibht' d'ar seorta
Nach stuadha tu chaoidh r'a chõrag (*b*)."
Bha neart a ghàir mar bhàir tuinne(*i*),
" Càite bheil aon laoch dhiubh sin (*k*)?
Ameasg nan triath tha mi || cosgairt, ||*e*
Anns gach cumasg choisgte stri leam || (*l*), ||*leat*
Mar choille chrionaich ar ant shliabh,
Is an osag dhian ann a car (*m*).
" Mur faigheam fein gu deonach,
Geill ar eagal mo gharbh chõraig,
Gheibh Eirin domh fein re mo linn
Do aindeoin Chormaic is Fhinn (*n*)."
* * * *
Sin nuair dhèirigh an dà thriath
Le neart an claidhmhean is an sgiath,
Gud fhògra an talamh teann
Le traidhibh anns an duaidh || sin. ||*uair*
Mar fhuaim coille re gaoith nan gleann
Bha scleo nan curaidhean co theann.
Seach oiche agus seach lò
Ag iomarscleo 's ag iomarbhàgh ;

---

ny mighty men are seen from Tura's windy walls."

Fingal, Book I. p. 220, 221. Lond. 1773.

" He spoke, like a wave on a rock, who in this land appears like me? Heroes stand not in my presence: they fall to earth from my hand.

Who can meet Swaran in fight? Who but Fingal, King of Selma of Storms?

(*b*) Kenn. Col. I. p. 86, 87. (*i*) Kenn. p. 129. st. 5. (*k*) Kenn. Coll. I. p. 87. st. 2. (*l*) Kenn. p. 68. st. 4, 5. (*m*) Id. p. 20. st. 2. (*n*) Id. Coll. I. p. 86. l. 4.

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" Vain [I said] is thy expectation, mighty as thou art,
That the strength of thy hands of war, or thy prowess,
Can ever accomplish our destruction.
Many a hero will be found, of our race,
Whom thy battle shall never bend."
He spoke with the force of a breaking wave,
" Where shall one hero of those be found?
I prevail over the mighty;
Their battle yields in my presence,
As the decayed grove of the mountain
Before the rapid sweep of the whirlwind.
If I do not receive, with consent,
That submission which the dread of my furious strife re-
I shall possess myself of Erin for life [quires,
In defiance of Cormac and of Fingal."

* * *

When the two chiefs arose
In the strength of their swords and their shields,
The solid earth was removed by their heels
In the terror-raising contest. [leys
As the sound of a wood which opposes the wind of the val-
Was the struggle of the champions, maintained in equal
By night, and by day, [poise.
They continued the varying struggle, and the doubtful exertion.

Once we wrestled on Malmor; our heels overturned the wood. Rocks fell from their place; rivulets changing their course, fled murmuring from our side! Three days we renewed the strife; heroes stood at a distance and trembled. On the fourth, Fingal says, that the King of the Ocean fell! but Swaran says, he stood.

Let dark Cuthullin yield to him that is strong as the storms of his land! Ibid. p. 221.

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Is an ceann an naoidhe tràth
Cha b'ard an Garbh ar mhuigh na gaisge (*o*).

* * *

" Beireamsa briathar righ ann,
A fearan || àillidh na hEirean || *fhearaibh*
Nach teid mi fein ann mo luing,
Is mi gun ghèill o Chuchulan."
" Beireams' briathar righ eile,
(Se labhair ant ard dubh || armach,) || *chu*
Nach teid mo gheills' ar sàile
Is mi fein ann mo bheatha.
Cha tabhair e || mo gheills' ar sàile || *thu*
Is gun ann || fein ach allamharach (*q*)." || *amad*
An sin thog Cuchulan a sgiath
Thar a mhaoilin bhar-liath:
Sheall Naos || ar a dha shleagh, || *Snaois*
Is ghlac Conal a chlaidheamh (*r*).
San uair gabhte na mic righ
Ann an tigh Teambra gu fior,
Agus cuire iad amuigh
An treun laoich nam fhianais (*s*).
Mhic || Chairbre o an chraoibh ruaidh! || *mic*
Fhir is faoiltiche gun fheall (*t*)!
Buin leat Lugha maith o ridhe,

" No! replied the blue-eyed chief, I never yield to mortal man! Dark Cuthullin shall be great or dead! Go, son of Fithil, take my spear. Strike the sounding shield of Semo. It hangs at Tura's rustling gate. The sound of peace is not its voice! My heroes shall hear and obey." Curach leaps from the sounding rock; and Connal of the bloody spear! Crugal's breast of snow beats

(*o*) Flet. p. 193. st. 1. (*q*) Id. p. 192. st. 2, 3, 5.
(*r*) Id. p. 191. st. 1. (*s*) Id. p. 189. st. 3. (*t*) Ib. st. 5.

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When the third day had closed,
The Garve no longer stood on the field of valour.
* * *

" I declare on the word of a king,
That from the fair land of Erin,
I shall not depart in my ship,
Until Cuthullin yield to me."

" I too, on the word of a king, declare,
(Replied the warrior, tall and dark,)
That my yielded pledge shall not be carried to sea,
While I alone do live.
Nor shall he who is a foreign foe
Bear captives from me over waves."

Then did Cuthullin rear his shield
Over the grey-coped postern.
Naos looked on his two spears,
And Conal grasped his sword.

" Let the sons of kings assemble instantly
In the house of Taura, to their trust,
And let them turn out on the field
Their able warriors in my presence.
Son of Cairbar from the red tree!
Thou who art generous beyond all, and without guile! [tain,
Bring Luga, the good, from the green dwelling of his moun-

---

high. The son of Favi leaves the dark-brown hind. It is the shield of war, said Konnar! the spear of Cuthullin, said Lugar! Son of the sea, put on thy arms! Calmar, lift thy sounding steel! Puno! dreadful hero, arise! Cairbar, from thy red tree of Cromla! Bend thy knee, O Eth; descend from the streams of Lena. Ca-olt, stretch thy side, as thou movest along the whistling heath of Mora: thy side that is white as the foam of the troubled sea, when the dark winds pour it on rocky Cuthon.

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Agus Fiamhai mac gu ruithe,
Aodh mac Gharai a ghluin ghil,
Is Caoilt ro gheal mac Rònain,
Fear dian an taoibh ghil;
A || chneas mar ṗhobhar srutha || *Do*
Ar an tràigh re || catha cuir. || *mar*
Agus Fraoch fial mac Fiui,
Sugha, sgiath ar cumta || am bladh; || *gumeid*
Dea mhac righ leithir Lncair,
Cormag an luingis go muaidh.
" A mhic Chairbre o an chraoibh ruaidh!
Buidhne borbara nach borb asteach,
Buin leat gu luath o fhearaghuth (*u*).
Mac samhailt triall nan laoch
Is ant shrann-ghaoth teachd thar aonach (*x*);
Mar thoirm nan eaṡaiche dian
Chluint' an saltraich || astar cian (*y*). *slachdraich*
An gnuis shoilleir le an armaibh gaoil || || *caol*
Is cian a dhealra ar an raon.
Dhimich am fir ar ant shliabh
Chum buaidh no bàis mar eallt ian (*z*).
Bailcea na sgiath gu hard
Dol asuas san iarmailt (*a*).
Do sgreadail an arm dealrach
Cho-fhreagair na creagan arda (*b*).

Now I behold the chiefs, in the pride of their former deeds!—They come like streams from the mountains; each rushes roaring from his hill. Bright are the chiefs of battle, in the armour of their fathers. Gloomy and dark their heroes follow, like the gathering of the rainy clouds

(*u*) Flet. p. 190. (*x*) Kenn. p. 141. l. st. (*y*) Id. p. 145. st. 1.
(*z*) Id. p. 144. st. 4. (*a*) Sir Jo. Sincl. p. 12. st. 4.
(*b*) Kenn. Coll. I. p. 155. l. st.

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And Fiavi the son of the chace;
Eth, son of Gara of the white knee,
And Caolt, the fairest, son of Ronan,
Rapid hero of the whitest side:
His side as the foam of the flowing sea,
When the wind pours it on the beach along with the drifted [snow.
Fraoch, also, the liberal son of Feuo,
Suga, the guardian shield of fame;
And the excellent son of the sea-skirted Lucar's king,
Cormac of the well-fashioned ships.
"Son of Cairbar from the red tree!
Bring speedily by the sounding call of thy voice,
The fierce bands, not fierce at home†."
Such is the coming of the heroes,
As the roaring wind when it brushes athwart the lofty moun- [tain.
Like the noise of streams rushing in cataracts,
Their tread is heard afar.
Bright is their face in the armour of their kindred,
Which distant gleams on the dusky heath.
Their men followed, along the hill,
To conquest or to death, like a flight of sea fowls.
The sound of battle from shields reared on high,
Ascends aloft in air.
The crash of glittering arms
Is echoed from the towering rocks.

---

behind the red meteors of heaven. The sounds of crashing arms ascend. The grey dogs howl between. Unequal bursts the song of battle. Rocking Cromla echoes round. On Lena's dusky heath they stand, like mist that shades the hills of autumn; when broken and dark it settles high, and lifts its head to heaven!

† *i. e.* Fierce in battle, but mild in peace.

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Gadhair is fiadhchoin || nan carn || *fiadchait* *
Bu fhada chluint' an sgàirn gach taobh (*c*).
Chuirthe an tulach ar bhallchrith (*d*).
Sheasadar uile ar an tom (*e*),
Mar cheathach nam beanntan arda,
Nuair bheanas da neart an àile (*f*).
Deir—re a luchd seilge [*gun mheirgeadh*
" A laoch nan ard ghleann go meirgibh ||, || *arm glan*
Tha imirt nan calg nar caraibh
Is fearr na ruith fhiadh ar bharaibh.
Tha ar naimhde teachd nan ceàdaibh
Thabhairt dhinn ar tighearnais (*g*);
Mar fhrois thig on iar na gathaibh
Roi na gaothaibh baoghlaich plathach (*h*).
Eirin o thuinn gu tuinn,
An geill i d'an aona chuing (*i*)?
" Fàilte dhuitse Chonail cheàtaich (*k*)!
Leis am bristear gach fearn || gàbhaidh (*l*); || *birnn*

" Hail," said Cuthullin, " sons of the narrow vales! hail, hunters of the deer! Another sport is drawing near: It is like the dark rolling of that wave on the coast! Or shall we fight, ye sons of war! or yield green Erin to Lochlin? O Connal speak, thou first of men! thou breaker of the shields! thou hast often fought with Lochlin: wilt thou lift thy father's spear?"

" Cuthullin!" calm the chief replied, " the spear of Connal is keen. It delights to shine in battle; to mix with the blood of thousands. But though my hand is bent on

* FIADHCHAIT (i. e. *wild cats*) appears from the context, to be pronounced by the reciter of this passage in mistake for FIADHCHOIN, which signifies *wild dogs* or wolves. For SGAIRN, which denotes at once the *bowl of dogs*

(*c*) Kenn. p. 106. st. 7. (*d*) Mr. M'Lag. p. 87. st. 6. (*e*) Kenn. Coll. I. p. 23. st. 4. (*f*) Id. p. 155. st. 5. (*g*) Kenn. p. 142. st. 2, 3. (*h*) Id. p. 141. l. st. (*i*) Mr. M'Lag. p. 84. l. st. (*k*) Kenn. p. 82. l. st. (*l*) Id. p. 87. st. 4.

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The howl of dogs, and the growling of wolves from their caverns,
Are heard at a distance on every side:
The green mount quakes around.
They stood assembled on the hill
Like mist on the lofty mountains
When it is touched by the strength of air.
[The chief] thus addressed his hunters,
" Hail, heroes of the narrow vales, and waving standards!
The sport of spears is drawing nigh,
Which excells the chasing of deer on the heights.
Our foes are advancing by hundreds,
To spoil us of our dominion;
Like the gathering of rainy clouds from the west,
When they fly to destroy before the flashing wind.
Shall Erin, from wave to wave,
Yield to their one yoke?
" O Conal, sound of judgment, I greet thee!
Thou who breakest each shield in danger!

---

fight, my heart is for the peace of Erin. Behold, thou first in Cormac's war, the sable fleet of Swaran. His masts are many on our coasts, like reeds in the lake of Lego. His ships are forests cloathed with mist, when the trees yield by turns to the squally wind. Many are his chiefs in battle. Ib. p. 221,—224.

and the *growling* of wolves, cannot be applied in any sense to a wild cat. Though *fiadhchoin* be now an obsolete expression, it was familiar to the more ancient bards. Thus, in *Laoidh Chlainn Uisnich*, communicated to the Committee by Mr. Malcolm Mac Donald, Tarbert, from the recital of Donald M'Callum in Kilcalmonell of Kintyre, we find (stanza 7. l. 3.) 'S air chuilen na fiadhchon: And in the Collection published by John Gillies, Perth, 1786, we read (p. 261. l. 5.) " Is air chuilcinibh na'm fiadhchor."

MADA ALLAIDH, which literally means *wild* or *savage dog*, is the common term for a wolf. FAOL, which occurs in ancient MSS. and poems, has longsince fallen into disuse; but is still preserved in FAOILTEACH, or FAOILTMHI, the *wolf-month*, which includes the last fortnight of winter, and the first of spring.

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Sgaoilte do chliu anns gach àm (*m*),
Is iomadh cèad a dhiong thu in corag (*n*)!"
Tog do ghath is noch do ghniomha,
O nach eil do'n || dì ach cõrag || d (*o*)
" A laoich nan gorm-shul suilbhear (*p*)!"
Labhair e gu ciuin mar b' àbhaist (*q*),
" Ag Conal tha cruaidh lann ghiar (*r*)
Chad fhuair coimheach riamh mi glacta (*s*).
And fhidir sibh an camhlach ard?
No cia is ceann ard ar na slòigh (*t*)?
Mar chuilc Loch Leuga an àireamh
Thriall an tràigh san aird an ear,
Na thog trein an siuil gu hàrd,
Ar gach bàrc* a thainig ar lear (*u*).

* * * *

Cha do thrèig sinn riamh na cathan
La an àir ar làr a chatha.
Sheas o thòs an tùs na teugbhoil,
Ann bu mhinig imirt gheurlann.
Eug nan creuchd an d'eur ga sheachna?
No beum cheàd an threig le meatachd?
Thuirling an diu sluagh gun àireamh
Feadh nam beann, is gun Fhionn à làthair.
Is baoghalach dol na'n dàil,
Is tu ar òrigri Innsefail.

—" I never fled, young son of Matha! I was swift with my friends in fight; but small is the fame of Connal! The

* Barc is one of the many Celtic words which were retained by the French, and thence transferred into the English; being acknowledged as a genuine term of the Armoric by the learned Pelletier in his excellent Dic-

(*m*) Id. p. 83. st. 1. (*n*) Id. p. 82. l. st. (*o*) Id. p. 85. st. 4. (*p*) Id. p. 82. st. 1. (*q*) Id. p. 81. st. 3. (*r*) Id. p. 72. st. 2. (*s*) Id. p. 80. st. 6. (*t*) Id. p. 12. st. 5. (*u*) Id. 19. st. 2.

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Many a hundred hast thou subdued in battle,
Thy fame is always spreading!
Do thou lift thy spear and show thy deeds,
Since all they desire is battle!"

"Blue-eyed hero of the chearful look!"
He replied with wonted calmness,
"The well-tempered sword of Conal is keen,
Never did an enemy find me captive.
But have you considered that high-masted fleet?
Or who he is that sways its host? [strong,
Like the reeds of the lake of Lego were the numbers of the
As, approaching our strand from the east,
They furled the sails aloft,
Over each bark that crossed the ocean.

* * *

We never forsook the fighting hosts
In the day of slaughter, in the midst of battle.
We have stood the foremost in the front of conflict,
Where frequent was the play of keen-edged swords.
Did we ever shun the death of wounds?
From the stroke of hundreds did we shrink in dismay?
To day a numberless host descends upon our hills,
And Fingal is not present.
It is not safe to go forth to meet them,
While thou hast but the youth of Inisfail.

---

battle was won in my presence; the valiant overcame! But, son of Semo, hear my voice, regard the ancient throne of Cormac. Give wealth and half the land for peace, till Fingal shall arrive on our coast. Or, if war be thy choice, I lift the sword and spear. My joy shall be in the

tionary of that language. "Bark, batiment de mer qui sert au transport des marchandises." Dictionaire de la langue Bretonne par Dom Louis Le Pelletier Religieux Benedictin de la Congregation de S. Maur. Fol. A Paris 1752.

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Cha mhasla dhuit sìth re laoch,
Gus tig Fionn le chalmaibh gaoil.
Ach ma is roghnaich leatsa imeachd
Chuca siar ro thriall thar linne,
Is ullamh thogas sinn arn arma (*x*)
Is tric a dhears an dubhra gharbh-cheth (*y*)."

An sin do ràdh an calma
" Se cath fuileach mor mhiann m'anama,
Far an cluinnte fuaim na lainne
Mar thorruin ro fhrois mŭnaidh ‖ (*z*). ‖ *no treotha muime*
Faiceam uile sibh an òrda, *
Aiteam chathach, rathach, loinreach.
Imichibh an sin ‖ ar an fhraoch, *An tin dhiuich sinn*
Ag claoidh ‖ fradhairc mar ghrein shamhrai, ‖ *chlaoidhe*
Mun tig fuaim ‖ thar slios ant shleibhe ‖ *B'fhuaimnoche sios*
Ar ‖ coill Mhor'airn roi ghaoith threinmhoir (*a*). ‖ *No*

* * *

Mar ęasaicheaŋ nam beanntan
A tuiteam in gleann caol fàsaich (*b*),
Ar ‖ theirbeirt teine na nial (*c*), ‖ *Mar*
Ged shiana tathaisg 's ged ràna sliabh (*d*)
San dàil chaidh suinn na h Eirean (*e*).
Ghluais ‖ e fein, is ‖ neart a chuim ‖ *Ghluaiseamar* ‖ *bha*

midst of thousands; my soul shall lighten through the gloom of the fight!"

" To me," Cuthullin replies, " pleasant is the noise of arms! pleasant as the thunder of heaven, before the shower of spring! But gather all the shining tribes, that I may view the sons of war! Let them pass along the heath,

(*x*) Kenn. p. 143. st. 1, 2, 3, 6, 7. (*y*) Kenn. Coll. I. p. 154. st. 6.
(*z*) Ibid. p. 154. l. st. (*a*) Ibid. p. 155. st. 2, 3, 4. (*b*) Kenn. p. 55. s t. 4.
(*c*) Id. p. 20. st. 1. (*d*) Capt. M'Donald of Breckish, p. 33. st. 1.
(*e*) Kenn. Coll. I. p. 9. l. st.

* See NOTE I. at the end of this Number.

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It is not disgraceful for thee to make peace with a hero,
Till Fingal shall arrive with the mighty and the friendly.
But if it be thy choice to advance
Against those adventurers of the ocean,
Readily shall we lift each weapon [war."
That has often lightened through the stormy gloom of
The mighty then replied,
" Bloody battle is the chief delight of my soul,
Where the noise of arms is heard
As thunder before the shower of the mountain.
Let me view the gathered ranks of my host,
The shining and successful tribes of war.
Let them pass along the heath,
Dazzling the sight as the sun of summer,
Before the sound which descends by the side of the mountain
Is echoed by the wood of Morvern to the furious wind."

* * *

As the gathered streams of the mountains
Falling on the narrow vale of the desart,
When clouds send forth their lightening,
And the shrieking of ghosts is mingled with the roar of hills;
So, moved on to battle the valorous force of Erin. [his breast
[The chief] himself, in advancing, poured valour forth from

---

bright as the sun-shine before a storm; when the west-wind collects the clouds, and Morven echoes over all her oaks! Ib. p. 225, 226.

* * *

As rushes a stream of foam from the dark shady deep of Cromla; when the thunder is travelling above, and dark-brown night sits on half the hill. Through the breaches of the tempest look forth the dim faces of ghosts. So fierce, so vast, so terrible rushed on the sons of Erin. The chief, like a whale of ocean, whom all his billows pursue, poured valour forth, as a sream, rolling his might along the shore.

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Mar neart na tuinn gu morthir (*f*).
Bhuail chuca || an dàmhair, || *chugain*
Mar bhosraich chruaidh sa gheamhra (*g*).

* * *

Thainig a teann-raith gun fhuireach.
" Gu facas thall cath-charbad sin ann,
Am fonnadh† fioghal fionn,
Gu liosta agus gu luath,
Gu làmhach is gu làn-ghlic:
Mar cheathach gealdhain ag èirigh
Fo a iomal dearg-chaoin
Ar mullach maol liath.
Am pùbul uaine caidh ronbhaidhe;
An roth fiundruin bhi cèir urard:
A bheann iubhra, dhiasach || ghasach! || *ghisach*
Caoine gach reile airt || || *ard*
Do bhi anns a charbad,
Is leus tainea'antach soluis

The sons of Lochlin heard the noise as the sound of a winter storm. Ib. p. 230.

* * *

He went. He trembling swift returned. His eyes rolled wildly round. His heart beat high against his side. His words were faultering, broken, slow. " Arise, son of ocean, arise, chief of the dark-brown shields! I see the dark, the mountain-stream of battle! The deep moving strength of the sons of Erin! The car, the car of war comes

† The word FONNADH, which is synonimous with CARBAD, and denotes a car or chariot, has been disused for ages in the common speech of Scotland and Ireland. Several words besides, which occur in this description, are equally obsolete, though their meaning is preserved by ancient Glossaries of rare or obsolete expressions; the most important of which Messrs. O'Clery and Plunket had the merit of collecting and arranging, from whose writings they were transferred to the Archæologia Britannica of Mr. Edward Lhuyd.

(*f*) Id. 136. st. 1. p. 138. 1 st. (*g*) Id. p. 155. st. 6.

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As a billow which rolls its strength to the shore.
The noise came suddenly upon them,
Like the bursting gale of winter.

* * *

He came—running without delay.
" I have there seen the car of battle!
The shining car of many corners!
Moving sometimes slow, and sometimes rapid—
Guided by the skilful and the wise!
It is like the mist which bright arises
From its edge of mild red light
On a bare and stony summit.
Its green covering is formed of haircloth.
On its wheel, smooth as bone, is the gloss of wax.
Its beam of yew with full-grained ears and spreading boughs
Around the car [is carved!
Is every smooth and shining pebble.
The gleaming light which darts a double ray

---

on, like the flame of death! the rapid car of Cuthullin, the noble son of Semo! It bends behind like a wave near a rock; like the sun-streaked mist of the heath. Its sides are embossed with stones, and sparkle like the sea round the boat of night. Of polished yew is its beam; its seat of the smoothest bone. The sides are replenished with spears; the bottom is the footstool of heroes! Before the right side of the car is seen the snorting horse! The high-maned, broad-breasted, proud, wide-leaping, strong steed of the hill. Loud and resounding is his hoof; the spreading of his mane above is like a stream of smoke on a ridge of

It is worthy of remark that the illiterate reciters of Ossian's Poems repeat correctly a great many words which neither they themselves nor the generality of their hearers understand; although it must be owned, on the other hand, that numberless words are greatly corrupted, or totally altered in their recital.

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A dibh-rionn a dhibh bhroinn dearg,
Mar fhreothal ghealghaidh na mara
Ma thaobh libhearn ag ăibh duireoirt (*b*).
Gheibhte in toiseach a charbaid (*i*)
Ant each liath, lùthor, urraiceach,
Arraiceach, treasdach, luath-bhara,
Stuaghor, dea-fhaicilleach, ionmruith,
Mor-mhùirneach, saoi-oileanda, sioth-fhada,
Ga b'ainm an Liath-maiseach ‡ (*k*).
Gheibhte in deire a charbaid (*l*)
Ant each crubhach, sithionta, searachoil,
Am fad-shliosaoh, bao-leumnach (*m*),
Caol-chasach, caol-ghruagach,
Ceann-àrd, stuai-bheimneach,
Seang, sèiteach, luath-leumnach (*n*),
Ga b'ainm an Du-sronmhor * (*o*).
Gheibhte am meadhon a charbaid
Na lanna luadhor
Mailte ris na heachaibh talganta,
Colga || beaga băsleathan || *Colganta*
Euchdail, steudail.
Na sriana caola cruaidhe (*p*),
Ladhair bheuldearg, bhuadhach, mac-bhrionna ;
Cobhra le bruit agus le briomha sliom-dhonna,
Grinn achduin na heachrai.
Mar cheathach ar mhachair bhàinligh,
Gum b'e sin druid is luas na heachrai

---

rocks. Bright are the sides of the steed! his name is Sulin-sifadda!"

Before the left side of the car is seen the snorting horse! The thin-maned, high-headed, strong-hoofed, fleet, bound-

(*b*) Sir George M'Kenzie, p. 1. (*i*) Capt. M'Donald, Breckish.
(*k*) Sir G. M'Kenz. p. 2. (*l*) Capt. M'Donald. (*m*) Sir G. M'Kenz. p. 2.
(*n*) Capt. M'Donald. (*o*) Sir G. M'Kenz. p. 2. (*p*) Capt. M'Don.

‡ *i. e.* The handsome gray. * *i. e.* The black with large nostrils.

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From its sides of crimson,
Is like the sparkling whirl of the sea
Round a ship, when the moon is not seen on the flood.
First in the car is found
The grey, the swift, the leading horse,
The large, thorough-passing, quick-travelling,
The broad-breasted, sure-eyed, and equal-paced,
The high-spirited, well-trained, and wide-leaping steed,
Whose name is Lia-maishah.
Last in the car is found
The strong-hoofed, and powerful horse,
The long-flanked, proudly bounding,
Small-shanked, thin-maned,
High-headed, quick-paced;
The light-bellied, snorting, eager steed,
Whose name is Du-srônmor.
In the centre of the car are found,
For the support of the generous steeds,
The arms known to fame.
The light, broad-plated, darts,
Of rapid flight and deadly aim.
The narrow, but firm reins.
The precious, highly polished bits, which shine in the mouth.
Lockers containing coverlets and glistening gems,
The beautiful furniture of the steeds.
As mist that scuds along the streamy plain
Is the close and rapid course of the horses

ing son of the hill: his name is Du-sronnal, among the stormy sons of the sword! A thousand thongs bind the car on high. Hard polished bits shine in a wreath of foam. Thin thongs bright-studded with gems, bend on the stately necks of the steeds. The steeds that like wreaths of mist fly over the streamy vales! The wildness of deer is in

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Is iad ag teachd d'arn ionnsuidhne (*q*);
Mar fhiadh is e ar chuthach,
Mar sheabhag ameasg eunlaith
No iolair neartor gun mhèineach (*r*).
Bhi laoch laidir lannor ann,
D'am b'ainm Cuchulan mac Sheimhi,
Mhic Shubhalt' mhic Bheugalta (*s*).
Gruaidh chorcair mar iubhar caoin,
Rosg chŏrach ghorm fu mhălai chaoil (*t*),
Follt ŏrabhar ŭrmhaomnach,
Is e teachd na chaoir theintigh chugain,
Le dha shleagh nan cuilg re ghualain (*u*).

* * * *

Mar gharbh ghaotha thig le greann,
Is a reubas scealpa nam beann,
Bha tàra na laoch nàmhaideach (*x*).
Mar easaiche nam beanntan
A tuiteam in gleann caol fàsaich (*y*),
Mhaoigh sinn garbh chath san uair,
In uchd righ Lochlain na mòrshluagh (*z*).
Chaidh gach fear ar chùl a chlaidhimh,
Chaidh gach flath ar chùl a sgèithe (*a*).

---

their course, the strength of eagles descending on their prey.

Within the car is seen the chief; the strong-armed son of the sword. The hero's name is Cuthullin, son of Semo king of Shells. His red cheek is like my polished yew.

(*q*) Sir G. M'Kenz. p. 2.
(*r*) Kenn. Coll. I. p. 138. l. st.
(*s*) Sir G. M'Kenz. p. 3.
(*t*) Mr. M'Lag. p. 82. st. 2.
(*u*) Mr. M'Farl. p. 20, 21.
(*x*) Mr. M'Lag. p. 98. st. 2.
(*y*) Kenn. p. 55. st. 4.
(*z*) Mr. Sage, p. 19. st. 5.
(*a*) Kenn. Coll. I. p. 37. st. 7.

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Which are advancing towards us;
Like a hart driven to fury,
Like a hawk among a flight of birds,
Or a ruthless eagle pouncing in his strength.
Within the car is the strong-armed hero of swords,
Whose name is Cuchullin, the son of Semo,
Son of Suvalta, son of Bègalt.
His red cheek is like the polished yew:
Lofty the look of his blue-rolling eye beneath the arch of his brow.
His bushy hair is a waving flame,
As coming towards us, a fiery bolt,
He wields both his forward spears.

* * *

Like furious storms which come darkly frowning,
And rend the rocky peaks from their hills,
Toward each other approached the hostile heroes.
Like cataracts which fall from mountains,
To mix in the narrow pass of the desert,
Rough and instant we joined battle
To the breast of Lochlin's king and his mighty host.
Chiefs opposed shield to shield;
Men met sword to sword.

The look of his blue-rolling eye is wide, beneath the dark arch of his brow. His hair flies from his head like a flame, as bending forward he wields the spear. Ib. p. 231, 232.

* * *

Like autumn's dark storms, pouring from two echoing hills, towards each other approached the heroes. Like two deep streams from high rocks meeting, mixing, roaring on the plain; loud, rough and dark in battle meet Lochlin and Innis-fail. Chief mixes his strokes with chief, and man with man; steel, clanging, sounds on steel.

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B'e sin an cŏrag teth teann,
A sgolta sgiath is chruaidh lann (*a*).
B'iomadh caoir do theine ruadh
O fhaobhar nan arm geur cruaidh,
Oscionn nan ceannbheart cŏrach (*b*),
Bu lionor lot garbh sleagha (*c*).
Bhi fras fala re làr
Ceo teas a dol san iarmailt (*d*),
Cha robh fanna ar a chŏrag
Ach mar threin tuinne re huchd dòilinn (*e*);
Is chluinnte torann nan laoch
Mar chreag Ullann roi an iomaghaoith (*f*).
Bu lionor ann taoiseach na laidhe;
Bu lionor ann fleasgach a snuagha;
Bu lionor ann fir liosa geala
A frasa fal' ar na fraochaibh (*g*).

* * *

Mar mhìle tonn a bèacaich
In stoirm* èitidh re slios caraige (*h*),
Thionoil fiann Eirean gu tràigh
Thabhairt coinnimh do chlann nan Gall (*i*).
Mar leaca tuinndhe san fhaoilteach,
Is sruth dian a maoma nan dàil;
B'amhlai stachdraich na laoch so
A chosgairt na dhaom go || tràigh (*k*). ||'n

Helmets are cleft on high. Blood bursts and smokes around. Strings murmur on the polished yews. Darts rush along the sky. Spears fall like the circles of light, which gild the face of night. As the noise of the troubled

* See Note II.

(*a*) Kenn. Coll. I. p. 87. st. 5. (*b*) M'Farl. p. 58. st. 4.
(*c*) Gl. M'Kay, po. 1. st. 11. (*d*) Sir G. M'Ken. Dan Eibh. p. 2. st. 2.
(*e*) Kenn. p. 34. l. st. (*f*) Id. p. 35. st. 2. (*g*) Gl. M'Kay. po. 1. st. 12.
(*h*) Kenn. p. 82. st. 5. (*i*) Id. p. 17. st. 5. (*k*) Id. p. 9. st. 3.

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Close and arduous was that contest,
While shields were cleft, and swords were shivered.
Frequent darted the streaks of red fire
From the keen edge of tempered arms,
As they struck on erect helmets.
Wide and deep were the wounds of spears.
Blood showered upon the ground,
And raised its vapour warm in air.
So did the battle roll its force
As the troubled ocean pours its waves.
As the noise of thunder over the rock of Ullan before a whirlwind,
Such was heard the din of warriors.
Many a mighty chief was laid low.
Many a blooming youth was made pale.
Many were the white breasts of heroes,
Which poured out their blood on the heath.

* * *

As a thousand waves which roar
In the wrath of the storm, against the face of a rock,
So rolled the host of Erin to the shore,
To meet the sons of the race of strangers.
As a ledge of rocks on the wintry beach,
When the surf impetuous bursts towards it,
So did the heroes of these wait unshaken, shore.
To repell the force of those, as they were bending to the

---

ocean, when roll the waves on high. As the last peal of thunder in heaven, such is the din of war! Though Cormac's hundred bards were there, to give the fight to song; feeble was the voice of a hundred bards to send the deaths to future times! For many were the deaths of heroes; wide poured the blood of the brave! Ib. p. 233.

* * *

As roll a thousand waves to the rocks, so Swaran's host came on. As meets a rock a thousand waves, so Erin met

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Tha beum nan cèad eugach athach (*l*);
Mar theirbeirt teine na nial
Bha gach triath asios a sgatha ‖ (*m*). ‖ *a sgatha sios*
Dheugh na creagan, sgread na glinn
D'am beimnibh druim ar dhruim (*n*),
Ag èisteachd re slachdraich an dòrn,
Gach beum mar innen nan ord (*o*),
Is caoir theinntigh teachd a teallach (*p*).

* * *

Proinn chèad do bhiadh is do dhibh
Chaidh dheanamh dhoibhsan gun uireas (*q*).

* * *

Caireal cèatach mar bu chòir (*r*),
Bu bhinne na meoir chiuil a ghuth (*s*).
" Do bheathasa, fhir mhoir
Thainig as an easc ròigheach!
Na biodh nith bu liutha asteach,
Gabh thusa fial re faoilte (*t*)."
Mac righ Lochlain na mòr fheachd
Thug e na briathra borba (*u*):
" Cha tairis leam ur faoilte
Gus an iadhaim ma ur braighde,
Gus an cuiream ann mo luing asteach

Swaran of spears. Death raises all his voices around, and mixes with the sound of shields. Each hero is a pillar of darkness; the sword a beam of fire in his hand. The field echoes from wing to wing, as a hundred hammers that rise, by turns, on the red son of the furnace. Ib. p. 235.

* * *

—A hundred youths collect the heath; ten warriors

(*l*) Kenn. 143. st. 4. (*m*) Id. p. 20. st. 1. (*n*) Id. p. 39. st. 3.
(*o*) Id. p. 59. st. 1. (*p*) M'Farl. p. 22. st. 1. (*q*) Flet. p. 188. st. 4.
(*r*) Ld. Bannatyne, p. 4. l. 25. (*s*) Mr. Sage, p. 6. col. 2. l. 8.
(*t*) Flet. p. 189. st. 1. (*u*) Mr. Sage, p. 11. col. 2. l. 6.

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Death and terror mix in the wound-dealing strife of hundreds.
As a cloud gives out its fire,
Each hero deals destruction.
Rocks and vales re-echoed their strokes,
Which sounded in rapid succession,
Like hammers that rise by turns on the anvil,
When the bar comes fiery red from the furnace.

* * *

The feast, prepared by hundreds, is in readiness;
The plenteous repast of meat and of drink.

* * *

Carril, the graceful, as became him,
[Spoke] with voice softer than the strain of music.
" I bid thee welcome, O man of might!
Who hast come from the roaring of waters.
The varied feast prepared at our abode
Awaits thy liberal acceptance."
The prince of Lochlin's battling host
Delivered his ferocious words;
" By me the call to your feast shall not be accepted
Until I compass your captives round;
Until I place within my ship

---

wake the fire; three hundred choose the polished stones. The feast is smoaking wide! Cuthullin—spoke to the son of songs—" Rise, Carril of other times; carry my words to Swaran. Tell him from the roaring of waters, that Cuthullin gives his feast."—Old Carril went, with softest voice. He called the king of dark-brown shields! " Rise from the skins of thy chace, rise, Swaran king of groves! Cuthullin gives the joy of shells. Partake the feast of Erin's blue-eyed chief!" He answered like the sullen sound of Cromla before a storm. " Though all thy daughters, Inis-fail! should stretch their arms of snow;—yet fixed as Lochlin's thousand rocks, here Swaran should

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Roighne mhac-righ na h Eirean (*x*).
Geill na h Eirean a b'àill leam,
No fras bhèimean ma timcheal (*y*).
[Ged] shilea i na frasan dèarach
Ar na rasga ard ghearaith || || *gheurach*
[Ged] shilea i na frosan fola
Ar na rosga reannghlana (*z*);
Mar ghànraich èan ar an tràigh,
Chluinte iolach bhròin gach mnà (*a*)."

"Gèill Eirean uainn thar muir
Ge minic do shir oirn trèinfhir,
Ni frith is ni faighear gu brath (*b*).
Cuiribh ant shlige man cuairt duinn,
Biodh eibhneas ar gruaidh gach mithe.
O Bharda! seinnibh na duanan,
Cluinne an sluagh ur luadh-ghàra.
Co-fhreagra creagan is gleanutan
Do chosheirm cheann is chlàr ann.
Mar sin duinn feadh na hoiche
Gus an soillsich madain ghlè-gheal (*c*)."

* * *

Bu mhòr an toirm ar an tràigh.
Mar fhuaim tuinne bhà gach treud (*d*),
Mar thoirm ealltain ean gu tràigh (*e*).
[Mar fhuaim] na mile sruthan

---

remain; till morn, with the young beams of the east, shall light me to the death of Cuthullin.—Let dark Cuthullin yield to me the ancient throne of Cormac; or Erin's torrents shall show from their hills the red foam of the blood of his pride!"

"Sad is the sound of Swaran's voice," said Carril of other times! "Sad to himself alone," said the blue-eyed

(*x*) Flet. p. 189. st. 2. (*y*) Mr. M'Lag. p. 110. st. 5. (*z*) Sir G. M'Ken. Dan. Eibh. p. 7. st. 6. (*a*) Kenn. p. 59. st. 6. (*b*) Mr. M'Lag. p. 110. st. 6. (*c*) Kenn. p. 76. st. 5. (*d*) Id. p. 19. st. 6. (*e*) Id. p. 2. st. 7.

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The choicest son of Erin's king.
I desire the submission of Erin,
Or a shower that wounds shall shed around her.
Though a flood of tears should flow
From the eyelids of high-born virgins;
Though showers of blood
Should drop from star-bright eyes;
The mourning cry of all her women
Would be heard as the screaming of sea-fowl on the shore."

"Often have mighty heroes demanded,
That Erin's yielded pledge should be sent over sea,
But never was it, nor ever shall it be granted.
Let the shell go round to us,
Let joy beam in each warrior's countenance.
O Bards! raise the strains on high.
Let the people hear the sound of your gladness.
Let rocks and vales at once resound
To the joint melody of voices and instruments *.
And so let us pass the night
Till morning shine with brightest ray.

* * *

Loud was the noise along the beach.
As the sound of a wave was [the moving of] each tribe,
Like the rustling of a flock of seafowl to the shore.
[Their sound] was like a thousand streams

son of Semo. "But, Carril, raise the voice on high; tell the deeds of other times. Send thou the night away in song; and give the joy of grief." Ib. p. 236, 238.

The sound spreads wide. The heroes rise, like the breaking of a blue-rolling wave.—They rose rustling like a flock of sea-fowl, when the waves expel them from the shore, Their sound was like a thousand streams that meet

* Many a voice and many a harp in tuneful sounds arose. Fing. p. 279.

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A ruith an aon slugan o ardaibh,
Bhiodh a bèacaich gu treun meamnach
Le toirm gheamhrai o gach fàsach (*e*).

* * *

Thainig teachdaire san uair
O righ Lochlain na mòr shluagh,
Cìs a thabhairt d'a laimh
No Eirin uile fhàgail (*f*).
" Cha ghabh e ach cõrag dlùth
No do bhean is do chù f'a bhreth (*g*)."
Se freagairt a chuir sinn uainn
Gu rìgh Lochlain na mor shluagh
Nach tugamaid cìs no càin,
Ach gu fàga iad cinn re làr (*h*).
" Cha tabhair mise mo bhean
Do aon fhear a ta fui an ghrèin;
Cha mhò thiubhram Bran lem dheoin
An fheadh bhios au deò 'n am chrè (*i*)."
" Is beag leam sin re urn aodan
Is a liuthad laoch treubhach fearail
Thainig ann am feachd Righ Lochlain,
A fhèachain au cosna iad cìs oirbh (*k*).

---

in Cona's vale, when after a stormy night, they turn their dark eddies, beneath the pale light of the morn. Book II. p. 248, 249.

* * *

" Go, Morla, go," said the King of Lochlin, " offer peace to these! offer the terms we give to kings, when nations bow down to our swords."—Tall Morla came—He spoke to Erin's blue eyed chief, among the lesser heroes. " Take Swaran's peace," the warrior spoke, " the peace he gives to kings, when nations bow to his sword. Leave

(*e*) Kenn. Coll. I. p. 10. st. 1.
(*f*) Mr. Sage, p. 11. st. 6.
(*g*) Gen. M'Kay, Po. IV. st. 19.
(*h*) Mr. Sage, p. 11. st. 7.
(*i*) Kenn. p. 14. st. 5.
(*k*) Gen. M'Kay, Po. I. st. 8.

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Which rush from their heights into one dark eddying pool,
When the storm of winter, roaring loud and violent,
Rests on the surrounding wilderness.

* * *

Then arrived a messenger
From Lochlin's king of mighty hosts
Demanding that tribute should be delivered to him,
Or that Erin should be altogether abandoned.
" Leave thy spouse and dog at his disposal
Or give him the close conflict of arms."
An answer was sent
To Lochlin's king of mighty hosts,
That neither tribute nor submission would be granted,
But that the ground should receive the severed heads of his people."
" No man whom the sun beholds,
Shall ever receive my spouse;
Nor shall I consent to the delivering of Bran
While the breath is in my bosom."
" Vain is your presumption;
For many are the mighty heroes and the valiant,
Who have come in the King of Lochlin's host,
To force your submission.

Erin's streamy plains to us, and give thy spouse and dog. Thy spouse high-bosom'd, heaving fair! Thy dog that overtakes the wind! Give these to prove the weakness of thine arm; live then beneath our power!"

" Tell Swaran, tell that heart of pride, Cuthullin never yields. I give him the dark-rolling sea; I give his people graves in Erin. But never shall a stranger have the pleasing sun-beam of my love. No deer shall fly on Lochlin's hills, before swift-footed Lüath." *ii*

" Vain ruler of the car," said Morla, " wilt thou then fight the king? The king whose ships of many groves

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Thubhairt nach fàga again teach,
Beinn no amhain no tulach,
Ach Eirin na cròigan glas
A thogail leo na 'n loingeas (*l*);
O is righ e ar triathan na fairge
Is nach dearbhar maise || co àrd ris (*m*)." || *mise*

* * *

Chuir Righ Lochlain teachdair ar uair àraid
Dh ionnsai Fhinn 's e na righ òg san tràth sin
Ar Albain, ga iarrai gu luath go pòsa
A nighine feine in rioghachd Lochlain.
Thionala an sin an Fhiann,
Is bhiodh mac chon n' an rian,
Dh ionsai tighe Chromghlinn nan clach.
Da theach dhèg in longort Fhinn
Nuair racha sinn do Chromghleann,
Da theine dhèg anns gach tigh,
Fear agus cèad ma gach teine.—
Sin nuair thainig am fear mor
Dhruid am fianais ant shlòigh.
" Thaing mi a Lochlan shleaghaich
Bho an chuideachd ghuirm shèamaich,
Is mi thug an cascheum nach gann,
Thainig mi nall o Righ Lochlain.
Nighean righ Lochlain, am blàdh buidh',
Thug i gaol do Fhionn a hAlbain.
Is gile bian na canach slèibhe
'Na ùr shneachd ar bhăraibh ghèag (*n*):
Tha || a cridhe ionmhuin fial || *Bba*
Mar a ghrian 's na speuraibh ard (*o*).

---

could carry off thine isle? So little is thy green-hilled Erin to him who rules the stormy waves!" Ib. p. 250.

(*l*) Ld. Bannatyne, Errag. p. 5. st. 3. (*m*) Mr. M'Lag. p. 99. st. 4.
(*n*) Kenn. Coll. p. 90. st. 3. (*o*) Id. p. 105. st. 5.

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Nor shall they leave you house,
Mountain, stream, or hill.
But Erin, waving green,
Will be carried off in their fleet.
For their king rules the waves of ocean,
And who can equal him in power.

* * *

The King of Lochlin, on a time, sent a messenger
To Fingal the youthful King of Albion,
To entreat of him to go without delay
To marry his daughter in the kingdom of Lochlin.
Assembled were then the heroes of Fingal,
At the call of the son of the chace,
In the dwelling of Croma's stoney vale.
Twelve were the houses in the camp of Fingal
When we went to the vale of Croma;
Twelve were the fires in each house;
A man and a hundred were around each fire.
Thither came the man of high degree,
And spoke as he approached the presence of the people.
" I have come from Lochlin of spears,
From the blue-eyed race of darts.
Wide is the reach of my path;
I have come, over sea, from Lochlin's King.
The daughter of the King of Lochlin, that yellow flower of beauty,
Has given her love to Fingal from Albion.
Whiter is her bosom than the moss lilly of the mountain,
Or the snow that has newly fallen on the waving branch.
Her soul is generous and mild
As the sun in the height of the skies.

" Go, gray-haired Snivan," Starno said, " go to Arven's sea-surrounded rocks. Tell to the King of Selma; he the fairest among his thousands, tell him I give him my daughter, the loveliest maid, that ever heaved a breast of snow. Her arms are white as the foam of my waves.

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Shir i oirbhse, fhlatha na Fiann (*n*)
Dol da hiarrai thar loch druim cliar (*o*);
Thug i bòid nach trèig i a teach
Ach an racha Fionn ga sirre (*p*).
Fhalbh sinn an sin ar druim a chuain
Dea shluagh mhic Chumhail na Moir'in
Gus an ranaigmar a Bheirghe || bhàn || *Bheir*
Gu teach rùine mhic Chumhail.
An sin dubhairt Righ Lochlain ruinn
" Si do bheatha fein a Fhinn
Tha sinnè an so 'ar do chinn (*q*)."
Shuidh sinn anns a Bheirghe || mhòir (*r*) *Mheirghe*
Ag ithe 's ag òl rè seachduin (*s*)
'S na slòigh uile ma Righ Lochlain (*t*).

* * *

Mar neart na gaoithe
Leaga coillteach Mhorbhairn aobhaich (*u*);
Mar shruth uisge, chluinnte bèimnich
A tuiteam bhàr sgèith nam beann (*x*);
Mar itil nan èan in soinin
Is doirion a dubha an àdhair;
Bha toirm nan treon is na mìlidh
Le gathaibh liobhtha ag tearna || (*y*). || *gu'r bearnadh*

Her soul is generous and mild. Let him come with his bravest heroes, to the daughter of the secret hall!" Snivan came to Selma's hall: Fair-haired Fingal attended his steps. His kindled soul flew to the maid, as he bounded on the waves of the north. " Welcome," said the dark-brown Starno, " welcome, King of rocky Morven: Welcome his

(*n*) Sir G. M'Kenz. p. 1, 2.
(*o*) Flet. p. 20.
(*p*) Sir G. M'Kenz. p. 2.
(*q*) Ld. Bannatyne, p. 2. st. 3, 4, 6, 7.
(*r*) Sir G. M'Kenz. p. 3. st. 2.
(*s*) Ld. Bannat. st. 7.
(*t*) Sir G. M'Kenz. st. 5.
(*u*) Kenn. Coll. I. p. 82. st. 4.
(*x*) Kenn. p. 9. st. 2.
(*y*) Id. p. 27. st. 6.

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She requests that you, the chief of his heroes,
May go to bring her across the watery ridge;
For she has resolved to remain in her hall,
Until Fingal go to demand her."
We bounded over the ridge of ocean,
We the chosen band of the son of Comhal of Morven.
Till we reached the white-looking Berghe
Where dwelt the love of the son of Comhal.
"Welcome art thou, O Fingal!"
Said the King of Lochlin to us,
"Here we are waiting thy arrival."
We sat down in the spacious Berghe,
And seven days we feasted,
While all his people were around the King of Lochlin.

* * *

As the strong blasts of wind
Which lay the trees of the pleasant Morvern low;
As the streams which are heard to fall
From sides of adjoining mountains;
As the fluttering of birds in the sun-shine
When the lowring storm begins to darken the sky;
Such was the noise and tumult of the warriors
When polished darts began to descend.

---

heroes of might; sons of the distant isle! Three days within my halls shall ye feast; three days pursue my boars; that your fame may reach the maid who dwells in the secret hall." Fingal, Book III. p. 264, 265.

As a hundred winds on Morven; as the streams of a hundred hills; as clouds fly successive over heaven; as the dark ocean assails the shore of the desart: So roaring, so vast, so terrible, the armies mixed on Lena's echoing heath.

The groan of the people spread over the hills: it was

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Co-bhèacaich treun-thonn na buinne
Nuair bhuailt' iad re creagaibh arda
Le neart na gaoith tua san fhaoilteach,
Cha stuagha re gaoir an àrdchath (x).
Mar shile nam beann ar aonach
Bha creuchdan laoch a dorta,
Mar ghaoth chànranach Bheinn-ànna
Bha gàr nam fann anns a chòrag (a).
Fionn fuileach na sleagh rinn-ghiar (b)
Ruith e siar le tartar uamhan (c)
Mar spiorad fuar bheanntan arda (d).
Bu fhuaimniche sios slios ant shlèibhe
Na coill Mhorbhairn roi ghaoith Threunmhoir,
Re toirm uamhanach na mara,
Nuair bhèacas i ris gach caraig (e).
An sin chaidh na fir re chèile;
Fuileachdach treunmhor cruaidh e,
B'iomadh corp a bha ga shine
Le buillean a mhilidh ghruamaich (f).
Bhi fuil Ghuill gu a dhornaibh
In sithe nan cop corndhubh;
Faolan is Raoini mac Fhinn (g),
Mar aiteal theine nam beann

like the thunder of night, when the cloud bursts on Cona; and a thousand ghosts shriek at once on the hollow wind. Fingal rushed on in his strength, terrible as the spirit of Trenmor; when, in a whirlwind, he comes to Morven to see the children of his pride. The oaks resound on their mountains, and the rocks fall down before him. Dimly

(x) Kenn. Coll. I. p. 10. st. 2.
(b) Sir G. M'Ken. D. Eib. p. 1, l. 19.
(d) Kenn. Coll. I. p. 170. st. 4.
(f) Kenn. Coll. I. p. 42. st. 3.
(a) Kenn. p. 27. last st.
(c) Kenn. p. 82. st. 4.
(e) Id. p. 155. st. 4.
(g) Sir G. M'Ken. Dàn. Eib. p. 4, 5.

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Not so loud roar the waves of a streaming sea,
When driven against lofty cliffs
By the force of the northwind in winter,
As was the noise of the armies in the general conflict.
Like a spring from the face of a mountain*,
Blood flows from the wounds of heroes.
Like the sighing of the wind thro' the clefts of Benana
Was the groan of the people expiring in the contest.
Fingal of the sharp-pointed spears of blood,
Rushed on in his sounding terror,
Like the appalling spirit of the lofty mountains:
Louder, as he descended from his hill,
Than the wood of Morvern sounding under the wind of Tren-
When the dreadful storm of ocean [mor,
Is roaring against its rocks.
When he mixed in the throng of heroes,
Bloody was his progress, and determined his valour,
Whilst many a body fell outstretched
Under the strokes of his wrathful prowess.
Bloody were the hands of Gaul
In the shock of round black bosses.
Fillan and Ryno son of Fingal,
Were like a pillar of fire on the mountain

---

seen, as lightens the night, he strides largely from hill to hill. Bloody was the hand of my father, when he whirled the gleam of his sword. He remembers the battles of his youth. The field is wasted in his course!

Ryno went on like a pillar of fire. Dark is the brow of Gaul. Fergus rushed forward with feet of wind. Fillan, like the mist of the hill. Ossian, like a rock came down. I exulted in the strength of the king. Many were the

* Blood rises like the fount of a rock, from panting heroes around. Fing. B. 2. p. 258.

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Bha'n da || lann a cosgairt threun (*b*). || *do*
Gu || robh m'athairse fein || *Gha*
Catha an || chòraig na fheum || || *na* || *feim*
As nach tige dealbh chorp slàn
Ar a gheala chasa leanain (*i*).
A nochd is anfhann mo chàil
In dèigh bhi 'g àireamh na buidhne (*k*);
Chaill mi radharc mo dhà roisg;
Gur mi an sean-fhear bochd is mall (*l*)!
Chluinnte fuaim ar buillean uile
Mar thoirm tuinne re là gàbhai.
B' iomadh lethlamh is lethchos
In dèis an leadairt le gèarlainn,
Am buillibh a Chuinne Chròdha,
Bh' ar an lòn shios gun èiri (*m*).

* * *

A mhic mo mhic! thu'irt an righ,
Oscair, a righ nan òg fhlath!
Chunnaic mi dearsa do lainn, b'i m' uaill
Bhi ag amharc do bhuaidh sa chath.
Lean gu dlùth re cliu do shinnsear,
Is na dìbir a bhi mar iadsan.
Nuair bu bheo Treunmor na rath
Is Trathal athair nan treunlaoch,
Chuir iad gach cath le buaidh,

---

deaths of my arm! dismal the gleam of my sword! My locks were not then so gray; nor trembled my hands with age. My eyes were not closed in darkness; my feet failed not in the race!

Who can relate the deaths of the people? Who the deeds of mighty heroes? when Fingal, burning in his

(*b*) Kenn. p. 73. st. 3.
(*i*) Mr. M'Don. Staffa, p. 5. l. 3.
(*m*) Kenn. Col. l. p. 42.
(*i*) Sir G. M'Ken. p. 4. l. st.
(*l*) Mr. M'Lag. p. 116. st. 4.

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As their swords were subduing the mighty.
My father was driving the battle
Where it pressed the most;
Nor from him did bodily form retire unmaimed.
In the light of his steps I strove to follow.
But frail is my strength to-night
When I recount the warlike bands:
I have lost the sight of my eyes;
I am old, slow, and forlorn!
The sound of all our strokes was heard
Like the burst of a billow in the day of the fatal storm.
Many were the arms and legs which were severed,
Many the limbs which keen-edged swords did mangle,
When the valiant of the people, pressed by strokes,
Sunk on the sward, never more to arise.

* * *

Son of my son! said the king,
O Oscar, chief of the generous youth!
I saw the gleaming of thy sword,
And I gloried to see thee victorious in the battle.
Tread close on the fame of thy fathers,
And cease not to be as they have been.
When Trenmor of glorious deeds did live,
And Trathal the father of heroes,
They fought every battle with success,

wrath, consumed the sons of Loehlin?

* * *

"Son of my son," begun the king, "Oscar, pride of youth! I saw the shining of thy sword. I gloried in my race. Pursue the fame of our fathers; be thou what they have been, when Trenmor lived, the first of men, and Trathal the father of heroes! They fought the battle in their youth. They are the song of bards.

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Is bhuanaich iad dha gach teaghbhail,
Mairi an iomradh san dàn,
Ar chuimhne ag baird na dhèigh so.
Oscair! claoidhsa an treun armach,
Thabhair tearman do'n lag-lamhach fheumach.
Bi mar bhuinn-sharuth reabhaire geamhraidh
Thabhairt gleachd do naimhdibh na Feinne,
Ach mar fhann-ghaoith shèimh thaith shamhraidh
Bi dhaibhsan a shireas do chòbhair.
Mar sin bha Treunmor nam buadh
Bha Trathal na ruag na dhèigh ann,
Is bha Fionn na thaic ag an fhann
Ga dhion o ainneart luchd euceir.
Ann a aobhar shèimh mo làmh,
Le fàilte rachain na sheinneamh,
Is gheibhe e fasga is càird
Fu sgàil dhrithlineach mo lainne (n).

* * *

Là do Fhionn ar bheagan shuaigh
Ag eas Ruaigh nan sugha maith (o),
Chunnacas a seola o leur (p)
Curach ceo is aona bheum ann.
Stad chad rinne leis no tàmh (q)
Gus an d'ràinig e ant eas,
Is dhèirigh as maise tunn:
B' ionann dealra dhi is do'n ghrèin.

O Oscar! bend the strong in arm: but spare the feeble hand. Be thou a stream of many tides against the foes of thy people; but like the gale that moves the grass, to those who ask thine aid. So Trenmor lived; such Trathal was; and such has Fingal been. My arm was the support of the injured; the weak rested behind the lightening of my steel."

* * *

(n) Mr. M'Donald of Staffa, p. 5, 6. (o) Mr. M'Donald, Staffa, p. 7. & 8.
(p) Mrs. Nicholson, p. 2. (q) Mr. M'Donald, Staffa, p. 8. & 8.

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And won the praise of each deadly contest.
Their renown shall remain in song,
Preserved by bards of the time to come.
Oscar! do thou bend the strong in arms;
Protect the weak of hand and the needy.
Be as a springtide stream in winter
To resist the foes of the people of Fingal;
But like the soft and gentle breeze of summer
To those who ask thine aid.
So lived the conquering Trenmor;
Such, after him, was Trathal of victorious pursuits;
And Fingal has been the support of the feeble,
To guard him from the violence of the oppressive.
In his cause would I stretch my arm;
With chearfulness would I go to receive him;
And he should find shelter and rest
Under the shade of my brightening sword.

* * *

On a day that Fingal had but few in his train
By the fall of Roya that softly murmurs,
There was seen to sail in the mist of ocean
A boat that conveyed a lonely woman.
It neither halted nor rested
Till it reached the fall;
When out of it rose the beauty of female form.
She shone as a beam of the sun.

" Oscar! I was young like thee, when lovely Fainasollis came: that sun-beam! that mild light of love! the daughter of Cruna's king! I then returned from Cona's heath, and few were in my train. A white-sailed boat appeared far off; we saw it like a mist, that rode on ocean's wind. It soon approached. We saw the fair. Her white breast heaved with sighs. The wind was in her loose dark hair: her rosy cheek had tears.

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B' fhearr gu mòr a mèin na dreach (*r*).
" A ghèag na maise fu dhriuchd bròin"
Se labhair gu fòill mi fein
" Ma is urrain gorm lanna do dhion,
Bidh ar cridhe nach crion do 'n rèir (*s*)."
" Mo chomraic ort o is tu Fionn"
Do labhair ruinn a macaimh mnà,
" Ag feabhas d'ŭrlabhrai is do bhuaidh,
Mo chomraic ort gu luath tràth (*t*).
Si do ghnuis do an anrach a ghrian,
Si do sglath ceann-uidhe na bàigh (*u*).
Tòrachd do bhi orm ar muir,
Laoch is trom guin ar mo lorg (*x*),
Mac righ na Sorăcha th'ar mo thì (*y*),
Triath do 'n ainm a Maighre Borb (*z*)."
" Suidh thus' an so ar mo sgàth,
A mhaise mnà is àile ĩ!
Is do aindeoin a Mhaighre bhuirb,
Fu dhubhar mo sgèith gheibh thu dion."
Chunnacas a tighin ar steud
Laoch, is a mhèad thar gach fear,
Marcachd na fairge gu dian
San iul chiadna thainig a bhean (*a*).
Bu làn na crainn fa a || shiuil || *Bha lamhan na cruin shuil*

" Daughter of beauty," calm I said, " what sigh is in thy breast? Can I, young as I am, defend thee, daughter of the sea? My sword is not unmatched in war, but dauntless is my heart."

" To thee I fly," with sighs she said, " O prince of mighty men! To thee I fly, chief of the generous shells,

(*r*) Mr. Malc. M'Donald, p. 21.
(*s*) Ld. Bannat. st. 5.
(*t*) Mr. Malc. M'Don. p. 22.
(*u*) Mr. M'Don. Staffa, st. 11.
(*x*) Mr. M'Don. Staffa, st. 8.
(*y*) Mr. M'Don. Staffa, st. 9.
(*z*) Mrs. Nicholson, p. 4. st. 6.
(*a*) Id. st. 14.

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Her air far exceeded her figure.
" Branch of beauty covered with the dew of grief,"
I calmly said,
" If blue swords can defend thee,
Our dauntless hearts will second them."
" Thy protection I claim as thou art Fingal,"
Replied the daughter of youth,
" By the excellence of thy might and thy eloquence
I claim speedy and seasonable protection.
Thy countenance to the forlorn is the sun;
Thy shield is the dwelling place of mercy.
I am pursued on the sea;
A hero of heavy wrath is following my track;
The son of Sora's king pursues me,
The mighty chief, whose name is Mayro Borb."
" Rest thou here under my protection,
Beautiful form of the fairest hue!
And, in defiance of Mayro Borb,
Thou shalt find safety under the shade of my shield."
Now on a wave is seen advancing
A warrior whose stature none could equal,
Riding the sea with speed
In the very direction the maid had come.
Full rose his masts under their sails,

---

supporter of the feeble hand! The king of Craca's echoing isle owned me the sun-beam of his race. Cromala's hills have heard the sighs of love for unhappy Fainasollis! Sora's chief beheld me fair; he loved the daughter of Craca. His sword is a beam of light upon the warrior's side. But dark is his brow; and tempests are in his soul. I shun him, on the roaring sea; but Sora's chief pursues."

" Rest thou," I said, " behind my shield; rest in peace, thou beam of light! The gloomy chief of Sora will fly, if Fingal's arm is like his soul. In some lone cave I might

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Tighin o an tuinn gus an traigh || (b). || *tràigh*
Thug e ruathar fir gun chroill,
Nior bheannaich do Fhionn no d'a fhèinn;
Leum ant shaighead le sàr bhreachd,
Is thorachair le laimh an igheann (c).
Do chlaoidh iorghail || na mòr euchd || || *Ealtaine* || *fhearchd*
Mac righ na Sorăcha, sgèal truagh (d)!
Ar an tulaich chladhaichthe a deac
Is leac na mnà ar an taobh eile (e).

* * *

Labhair mac Chumhail re Goll (f),
" A Ghuill mhic Morna na mor ghaisgeanh,
Cŏisgse || cŏrag an fhir mhoir. || *Nach coisg thu*
Cha diult mi mo chŏna dhuit
Righ Fàil || re do fheuma an dàn (g). *A Rigb Fhàil*
Seinnibh caithrem bunaidh, gach fhlaidh,
'S òrain bhinne fea mo thaltai (h)."

* * *

Bu lionor cruit agus clàr,
B' iomadh bàrd a sheinne sgèal (i)

conceal thee, daughter of the sea! But Fingal never flies. Where the danger threatens, I rejoice in the storm of spears." I saw the tears upon her cheek. I pitied Crauca's fair. Now, like a dreadful wave afar, appeared the ship of stormy Borbar. His masts high-bended over the sea behind their sheets of snow. White roll the waters on either side. The strength of ocean sounds. "Come thou," I said, "from the roar of ocean, thou rider of the storm! Partake the feast within my hall. It is the house of strangers."

(b) Jo. M'Intosh, Ing. Ri. p. 4. st. 6.
(c) Id. Duan nah Ing. p. 8. st. 22, 23.
(d) Mr. M'Don. Staffa, st. 31.
(e) Mr. M'Lag. p. 93. st. 4.
(f) Mr. Malc. M'Don. p. 10. st. 26.
(g) Kenn. Coll. I. p. 91, st. 4. 6.
(h) Kenn. p. 76. st. 4.
(i) Id. p. 162. st. 2.

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As he came to land, over the billows.
He rushed on in his fury;
He neither hailed Fingal nor his people;
The unerring arrow flew from his hand,
And the maiden fell.
The strife of mighty feats
Bore down the King of Sora's son. O tale of woe!
On the green mount was dug his tomb of stone,
And over against it is the stone of the maid.

* * *

The son of Comhal spoke to Gaul,
"O Gaul, son of Morni of mighty deeds,
Do thou turn the battle of the man of might.
I King of Fail shall not withhold my aid
If, on this day, thou should'st need it.
Raise, O my bards, the strains of triumph,
And spread the melody of song over my dwelling."

* * *

Many a CRUIT* and many a harp was tuned,
And many a bard sung the tale.

The maid stood trembling by my side. He drew the bow. She fell. "Unerring is thy hand," I said, "but feeble was the foe!" We fought, nor weak the strife of death! He sunk beneath my sword. We laid them in two tombs of stone; the hapless lovers of youth! Ibid. p. 273,—277.

* * *

"O son of Morni," Fingal replied, "I glory in thy fame. Fight; but my spear shall be near, to aid thee in the midst of danger. Raise, raise the voice, ye sons of song, and lull me into rest."

* * *

Many a voice and many a harp, in tuneful sounds arose.

* See Note III.

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Bu bhinn bladhor ag an || ceol (*k*) *again*
Aigne mhòr do 'n fhine ghrinn (*l*).
Is mi Oisen dea mhac Fhinn,
Bha mi uair bu ghàirdeach leam,
Is laoch mi rinn iomadh àr
Ged thaim nois gun chàil gun ghean (*m*).
Mar a ghrian in cochal || na nèal || *cogall*
Dhubh mo ghnè, mo chruth, is mo chàil (*n*).
Fhinn uaibhrich dea righ Fàil (*o*)!
A bhuidhin buaidh làir in cõrag (*p*)!
Chan fhaicear thu sealg an fhèidh
No 'm blàr chèad a sgatha namh || (*q*). || *chuamh*
Na suinn chaomha chalma ghràidh
Bu mhòr bàidh, bu chian an cliu (*r*);
Ghluais na laoich do 'n uaigh gun lò,
Sin a fhag mar cheo mo shùil (*s*).
Beannachd ar hanam a || laoich! || *am*
Fhinn-Ghaoidheal a thriath na lann!
A b' fhearr eineach agus àgh,
Cha deachai làmh os do || cheann (*t*). || *a*

Co na daoine b'àill m'acanaich?
Si labhair rium mo nighean annsa (*t*).—
Mo dhea nighean! bha mi uair

Of Fingal's noble deeds they sung; of Fingal's noble race: And sometimes, on the lovely sound, was heard the name of Ossian. I often fought, and often won, in battles of the spear. But blind, and tearful, and forlorn I walk with

(*k*) Kenn. p. 161. st. 2.
(*l*) Kenn. Coll. I. p. 93. st. 6.
(*m*) Kenn. p. 164. st. 5, 6.
(*n*) Id. p. 73. st. 5.
(*o*) Id. p. 163. 1. st.
(*p*) Id. p. 113. st. 7.
(*q*) Kenn. Coll. I. p. 126. 1. st.
(*r*) Kenn. p. 162. st. 5.
(*s*) Id. p. 163. st. 4.
(*t*) Id. p. 130. st. 6. p. 163. st. 3. and Mr. Malc. M'Don. p. 7. st. 3, 5.
(*u*) Mr. Sage p. 1. st. 1.

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Soft on their music floated the fame
And high-minded pursuits of the accomplished race.
Joyful has been the time to me,
Ossian the dutiful son of Fingal,
Who have often dealt havoc in the field of heroes,
Though I be now feeble and disconsolate.
My mind, my form, and my fancy are darkened,
As the sun when he is wrapt in the folding of clouds.
O Fingal! thou good and magnanimous King of Fail,
Who prevailed in the fields of warfare!
I no longer behold thee in the chace of the deer,
Nor in the battle of hundreds, hewing down the foe.
The valiant, who were mild, strong, and lovely,
Of great compassion, and extensive fame;
The valiant are gone to the grave that sees not day:
Which has caused mine eye to become as mist.
Blest be thy soul, O Fingal!
Thou heroic leader of swords!
Who excelled in generosity as in success,
And whom no arm of might could controul.

Who are these that desire to partake in my grief?
It is the maid of my love that speaks.—
Daughter of my regard! the time has been

---

little men! O Fingal, with thy race of war I now behold thee not! The wild roes feed on the green tomb of the mighty King of Morven! Blest be thy soul, thou king of swords, thou most renowned on the hills of Cona! Ibid. p. 278, 279.

Who comes with her songs from the hill, like the bow of the showery Lena? It is the maid of the voice of love! The white-armed daughter of Toscar! often hast thou

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A ghlacain eilid ar chluais cian,
Is bheirin bior fuinn amach
Anns an ĕiche dhoirche dhaill (*x*),
Ge muladach mi nochd am monar
Gun athair, gun mhac, gun chaomhach (*y*).
O mhic, a luaidh! gur truagh an sgeul,
Mò || leon ag Caolbha na sruth mall, || *Dò*
Gun Fhionn, gun Fhaolan a bhi ann (*z*).
Chaochail mo fharadharc is mo shannagh,
Ach nin coisg an uaigh mo ghràdh (*a*).
A rìbhin ùr nan geala-ghlac (*b*),
Ged tha || mi nochd mo dhiobar seann-laoich (*c*) || *sil*
Dubhradh rium laoch calma
Ann am òige is bladh ar mo chruth,
An là sin do imich linn
Eimhir àlain an fhuilt ghuirm!
An ainnir bhruinard || bu ghile lamh (*d*) *fhiosard*
Nighean Bhranna nan cuach airgid (*e*),
Leannan coigrich Chormaic (*f*).
Ge do dhiult i iad uile
Eadar mhac righ is ro-dhuine,
Is dòigh gu tèidhin da h-iarrai
Le dà fhear dhèg do dhea fhiananbh (*g*).
Ghluaiseamar in neart na lòige,

---

heard my song; often given the tear of beauty. But thou come to the wars of thy people? to hear the actions of Oscar? When shall I cease to mourn by the streams of so-

(*x*) Kenn. p. 165. st. 5.
(*y*) Id. p. 138. st. 2.
(*z*) Id. p. 155. st. 4.
(*a*) Id. p. 163. l. st.
(*b*) Jo. M'Intosh. p. 2. st. 2.
(*c*) Mr. Sage, p. 1. st. 1.
(*d*) Mr. M'Kinnon, p. 1. st. 1, 2.
(*e*) Mr. Sage, p. 1. st. 2. 3.
(*f*) Mr. M'Kin. p. 1. st. 2.
(*g*) Mr. Sage, p. 2. st. 1.

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When I could take a hind by the ear,
Or descry the landmark beacon
In the dark and dismal night;
Although I be this evening mournful and alone,
Without father, or son, or friend.
O my son of fame! sad is the cause of my sorrow,
While I mourn by Cona of the slowly-moving streams,
Where Fingal and Fillan are seen no more.
My sight and my hue have failed;
But the grave cannot alter my affection.
Blooming maid of the whitest hand!
Though I be aged and forlorn to-night
I was called a hero of strength
When youth blossom'd over my form,
On the day that Eviralin of the beautiful hair
Took her departure along with me!
The high-bosomed maid of whitest arm,
The daughter of Branno of silver cups,
Who disdained the love of Cormac.
Though she had denied every suitor,
Whether son of king or noble,
I resolved to go in suit of her,
With twelve men of the excellent people of Fingal.
We moved in the strength of youth,

sounding Cona? My years have passed away in battle.
My age is darkened with grief!

Daughter of the hand of snow! I was not so mournful and blind. I was not so dark and forlorn, when Everallin loved me! Everallin with the dark-brown hair, the white-bosomed daughter of Branno! A thousand heroes sought the maid, she refused her love to a thousand. The sons of the sword were despised: for graceful in her eyes was Ossian! I went in suit of the maid to Lego's sable surge. Twelve of my people were there, the sons of streamy Morven! We

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Shiubhlamar gu ceann Loch Lèige (*g*).
Thainig ann ar coineamh amach
Oglach suairc iulach thug dhomhsa pòg
Is a chuir fàilt ar an dà fhear dhèg.
Nuair ab fhaoileach dhuinn do an òl,
Do fhiafraigh Brann, "Cid e ur seol?
Cid e ur gnothach gu harạidh."
Caoilt do fhreagair ar ar ceann,
"Ant aobhar ma an thainig sinn ann
Is ar gnothach uile gu do thigh,
Do iarrai ortsa do nighine."
"Co agaibh do an iarrar i?"
"Iarrar i do Oisen mac Fhinn (*b*)."
"Si mo nèarachd a gheibh thu,
A laoich làidir longphortaich!
Ged bhiodh agam dà nighin dèg,
Ag feabhas a chliu san Fhèinn,
Bhiodh a chèad nighean ag Oisen (*i*).
Fosgailear an grianan còrr
Bha ar a thugha le clòimh ian,
Bha cõlaichean ris do'n òr bhuidh
Agus ursanan do fhiundrain.
Nuair chunnacas le hEimhir fhèill
Oisen mac flatha na Fèinn,
An inghean ùr bu ghile glac
Thiubhair‖ i gràdh do an dea mhac (*k*). ‖ *tharuigh*
Ghluais sinn gu Druim-da-thorc,

---

came to Branno, friend of strangers! Branno of the sounding mail! "From whence," he said, "are the arms of steel? Not easy to win is the maid, who has denied the blue-eyed sons of Erin. But blest be thou, O son of Fin-

(*g*) Mr. M'Kinnon, p. 1. l. st.
(*b*) Mr. Sage, p. 2. col. 1.
(*i*) Mr. M'Lag. p. 42.
(*k*) Mr. Sage, p. 2. col. 2.

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And arrived at the head of the lake of Lego.
There came out to meet and conduct us
A generous youth, who gave me a salute
And gave a welcome to the twelve men.
When we had enjoyed the drink of the feast,
Branno enquired, "What is your purpose?
What your special business?"
Caoilt answered on our part,
"The reason for which we came hither,
And the whole of our business to thy house,
Is to seek from thee thy daughter."
"For which of you is she sought?"
"She is sought for Ossian son of Fingal."
"Happy is she who will get thee,
Mighty hero of the camps!
Though twelve daughters were mine,
So high is the fame of Ossian among the followers of Fingal,
That the first daughter should be his."
The chamber so highly prized is opened.
It was covered above with the down of birds.
Its doors were yellow with gold,
And the sideposts were of polished bone.
So soon as seen by the generous Eviralin
Was Ossian the son of the chief of heroes,
The blushing maid of whitest hand
Gave her love to the son of fame.
We proceeded to Drim-da-horc.

---

gal! Happy is the maid that waits thee! Though twelve daughters of beauty were mine, thine were the choice, thou son of fame."

He opened the hall of the maid, the dark-haired Everallin. Joy kindled in our manly breasts. We blest the maid of Branno. Above us on the hill appeared the people of stately Cormac. Eight were the heroes of the chief.

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Bha Cormag romhaim na longphort (*l*),
Is e g'ar feitheamh gu dàna
Le seachd cathaich diongmhalta (*m*).
Sluagh Chormaig gun do chas
Ag an ghabh an sliabh blà bamir (*n*).
Ochdar do bhi ag Cormag grinn (*o*),
Ionan in gniomh do Fhearaibh-bolg.
Mac Cholla, is Durra nan creuchd,
Mac Thoscair treun agus Taog (*p*);
Freasdal bàghach mac an rìgh,
Daire nan gniomh bu mhor àgh,
Daol bu mhath fulang sa chuing (*q*),
Is meirg Chormaig ghrinn na laimh.
Ochdar do bhi ag Oisen ard,
Ionan sa chath gharg d' a dhion.
Mulla, mac Sceinne is fial (*r*),
Scialaiche fior, flath na fiann,
Faolan agus Cairdhead ‖ cas, ‖ *Cairiall*
Dubh mac Reibhin nior thais colg,
Toscar an taobh ‖ ahiar do chlann ‖ *tus*
Chaidh fu 'n chrann an ceann Fhear-bolg.
Thachair Toscar, thachair Daol
Taobh re taobh ar làr ant shluaigh.
Bha còrag an dà churaidh chaomh

The heath flamed wide with their arms. There Colla; there Durra of wounds, there mighty Toscar, and Tago, there Frestal the victorious stood; Dairo of the happy

(*l*) Mr. M'Lag. p. 42. l. st.
(*m*) Mr. M'Kinn. p. 3. l. st.
(*n*) Mr. M'Lag. p. 43. st. 1.
(*o*) Mr. M'Kinn. p. 4. st. 3.
(*p*) Mr. M'Lag. p. 43. st. 2. & Mr. M'Kinn2n, p. 4. st. 3.
(*q*) Mr. M'Lagan, p. 43. st. 3.
(*r*) Ib. and Mr. M'Kinn. p. 4.

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Cormac was there in his camp,
Resolutely awaiting us
With seven able warriors.
When the people of Cormac turned towards us,
The hill seemed to flame.
Eight were the force of stately Cormac,
Equal in deeds of arms among the Fir-bolg:
Colla's son, and Durra of wounds,
The mighty son of Toscar, and Tago;
Frestal the battling son of the king,
Dairo of the happy deeds,
Daol the bulwark of the narrow way,
Who bore the standard of graceful Cormac.
Eight were the heroes of high-born Ossian,
All of equal might to guard him in stormy war.
Mullo, and the generous son of Shenn,
Skelaiche, the trusty and the noble among heroes,
Fillan, and Cairdal the wrathful,
And Du-mac-Rebhin of the steady spear.
Toscar, placed on the western flank,
Marched under our ensign staff against the Fir-bolg.
Toscar and Daol met
Side to side, on the field of combatants.
The battle of the two lovely champions

---

deeds; Dala the battle's bulwark in the narrow way! The sword flamed in the hand of Cormac. Graceful was the look of the hero! Eight were the heroes of Ossian. Ullin stormy son of war. Mullo of the generous deeds. The noble, the graceful Scelacha. Oglan and Cerdal the wrathful. Dunariccan's brows of death! And why should Ogar be the last; so wide renowned on the hills of Ardven?

Ogar met Dala the strong, face to face, on the field of heroes. The battle of the chiefs was, like wind, on

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Mar gun doirte gaoth a cuan.
Chuimhnich Toscar a sgian
Arm bu mhiann leis an fhear mhath;
Chuir naoi gona in taobh Dhaoil
Seal beag mun do chlaon an cath.
Bha Cormag || a borba ant shluaigh || *Combrdg*
Mar fhuaim uird re dearna lamh,
Ag iarrai gu h Oisen gach uair
Sa chath chruaidh a bheir se dhò ||. || *dboibh*
Do sgoilt Oisen ar ant shliabh
Fa chòig ||, sgiath ag || Cormag grinn, || *caogad* || *gu*
Is bhrist Cormag mac Airt
Fa chòig ||, lann ghlas ar an druim. || *caogad*
Thugas an ceann do Chormag cruinn
Ar ant shliabh, agus do nochd:
'S gu do ghluais go || flaith Fàil || *go*
'S an ceann sin am làimh ar fholt.
Ge b'e dh innse dhomhs' an sin,
An là ud ag cur a chatha,
Deire rium mar tha mi nochd,
Gum faighe e olc o mo làimh (*s*)!

* * *

An sin thainig Fionn fein amach (*t*);
Labhair e le iolach uamhar (*u*);
Is dhàrdaich a ghlor san uair (*x*).

---

ocean's foamy waves. The dagger is remembered by Ogar; the weapon which he loved. Nine times he drowned it in Dala's side. The stormy battle turned. Three times I broke on Cormac's shield: three times he broke his spear. But, unhappy youth of love! I cut his head away.

(*s*) Mr. M'Lagan, p. 43, 44.

(*t*) Kenn. p. 127. st. 4.

(*u*) Kenn. Cail. I. p. 40. st. 3.

(*x*) Fletch. p. 4. l. 6.

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Was like the pouring of wind from the ocean.
Toscar remembered his dagger,
The weapon which the hero loved.
Nine wounds he laid in the side of Daol;
And the battle speedily declined thereafter.
Cormac was rousing his people to fierceness
Like a hammer sounding under the strength of hands;
And he still pressed on towards Ossian
To engage him in the hard-fought fight.
Five times on the hill
Did Ossian cleave the shield of stately Cormac:
And Cormac son of Art,
Broke five green swords upon the height.
I cut away the head of Cormac,
And exposed it to view on the hill:
And I retired with the chiefs of Fail
As I held the head by the hair.
Whoever would have told me,
When that day I strove in battle,
That I should be in this condition to night,
Could not escape the vengeance of my arm!

* * *

Then Fingal himself came forth.
Loud and dreadful he sounded the call,
As he reared his voice on high.

Five times I shook it by the lock. The friends of Cormac fled. Whoever would have told me, lovely maid, when then I strove in battle; that blind, forsaken, and forlorn, I now should pass the night; firm ought his mail to have been; unmatched his arm in war! Book IV. page 283, 284, 285.

* * *

The king stood by the stone of Lubar. Thrice he reared his terrible voice. The deer started from the fountains

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Cho-eugh na creagа 's na beanntan (*y*);
Chuirthe iasg nan cuantan stuadhach
Ann an caoiltibh caola fuaraidh;
Chuirthe fèidh nam beanntan àrda
Gus na gleanntaibh fuara fàsaich;
'S èanlaith bhinn-fhoclach nan coilltean
Anns na speuraibh le crith oillte (*z*).
Mar easaiche bheann ag eughach (*a*),
Mor easaiche nan gleanntan
Srotha sios le slios nam beanntan (*b*);
Mar dhuibh-neoil o'n àird an ear (*c*)
Ar clòr rèidh na foilbhe fiunne (*d*);
Thionoil [ma] Fhionn na fèil' a shlogh (*e*),
Ar a ghlòrsan bu || bhinn eibhin (*f*). *gu*
A mhic Chumhail na Mòrbheurn (*g*)!
'S tric a sheas an trein || do chòrag (*h*); *treun*
Trein nam buadh bu chruaidh san tòir (*i*),
Fhuair buaidh ar gach borb-fhir còrag (*k*),
'S è'n lann || nimhe chaisge tòrachd (*l*)! *Is laimh*

* * *

Gluaisi Goll na chrulaidh chruaidh
Ann am fianais a mhor-shluaigh (*m*),
Na thorc àrd in tùs na hiorghuil (*n*).
Bhi a chlaidhimh ar sgàth a sgeithe
Ag an laoch re hainrèite (*o*).

of Cromla. The rocks shook on all their hills. Like the noise of a hundred mountain streams, that burst, and roar,

(*y*) Kenn. Coll. I. p. 92. st. 3.
(*a*) Id. p. 166. st. 2.
(*c*) Kenn. p. 67. st. 2.
(*e*) Id. p. 54. st. 7.
(*g*) Id. p. 37. st. 7.
(*i*) Id. p. 39. st. 6.
(*l*) Id. p. 33. st. 5.
(*n*) Fletch. p. 67. l. 4.
(*z*) Id. p. 98. st. 2.
(*b*) Id. p. 155. st. 5.
(*d*) Id. 28. st. 6.
(*f*) Id. p. 34. st. 5.
(*h*) Id. p. 129. st. 8.
(*k*) Id. p. 130. st. 5.
(*m*) Mr. M'Lag. p. 87. l. 1.
(*o*) Mr. M'Lag. p. 82. st. 8.

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Rocks and mountains echoed back the sound.
The fishes of the troubled sea moved to the depths
Of the narrow clifty straits;
The deer of the lofty mountains
Sought the cold vales of the desart;
And the melodious birds of the wood
Flew to the skies on trembling pinions.
Like roaring cataracts of the mountains,
Which pour their swelling streams
Down the steep into the vale;
Like darkening clouds from the east,
Which come over the serene face of the sky;
His people gathered around the generous Fingal,
For soft and pleasant to them was his voice.
O son of Comhal of Morven!
Often had her warriors stood in thy battle;
The warriors of victory who were unwearied in pursuit;
Who subdued each ferocious enemy in war; [foe!
And checked, with deadly sword, the advance of their spoiled

* * *

Gaul moved in his armour
Before the assembled host,
Like a huge boar that is foremost in the attack:
His sword waved over his shield
As the hero proceeded to strife.

---

and foam! like the clouds, that gather to a tempest on the blue face of the sky! so met the sons of the desart, round the terrible voice of Fingal. Pleasant was the voice of the King of Morven to the warriors of his land. Often had he led them to battle; often returned with the spoils of the foe! Ibid. p. 288.

Such were our words, when Gaul's loud voice came growing on the wind. He waved on high the sword of his father. We rushed to death and wounds. As waves,

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Bu gheal dearg gnuis an fhir
Ar sheol gaisge dol in iorghail (*p*).
Dhoirt iad chugain na sluaigh
Mar theachd a chuain ar ruadh rugha (*q*).
Gun do thog sinne na sleaghan
Is b'ann re haghaidh am bratach (*r*).
Cith fala do chamhaibh an corp (*s*)
Claidhmhean gam buala gu cruaidh
Fuil ar chraoisliche crao-ruadh
Is sgiathan nam bloidhibh re làr (*t*).
Cith teine d'an armaibh nocht (*u*)
Mar mhoirneis * do thine || teintich (*x*). *theine*
Gluaisi Goll gu diomasach dàna
Ar chiocras fola na diobhàla (*y*).
B'amhail a || imeachd san lòn || || *arn* || *lo*
Is iomaghaoth no ceo nam beann (*z*).
Bu lionor laoch fu iomadh creuchd
An dèigh nam buillean troma dòbhaidh
Thug Goll mac Morna mhic Nèamhain (*a*).
Bu deacair re a innse
Na thuit sa chath gun àireamh (*b*)
Uair || a thaing an diobhail (*c*). || *Orra*
'S mi Oisen an dèigh nam Fiann
Dh iomairich sgiath in cath garg,

---

white-bnbbling over the deep, come swelling, roaring on; as rocks of ooze meet roaring waves: So foes attacked and

(*p*) Mr. M'Lag. p. 87. st. 1.
(*q*) Kenn. p. 27. st. 5.
(*r*) Mr. M'Don. Staffa, p. 4. l. 14.
(*s*) Mr. M'Lag. p. 87. st. 3.
(*t*) Sir G. M'Ken. D. Eibh. p. 2. l. 7.
(*u*) Mr. M'Lag. p. 87. st. 3.
(*x*) Id. p. 101. l. 4.
(*y*) Id. p. 87. st. 3.
(*z*) Kenn. p. 160. st. 1.
(*a*) Kenn. Col. I. p. 38. l. st.
(*b*) Mr. Malc. M'Don. p. 19. st. 42.
(*c*) Sir G. M'Ken. NO. II. p. 9.

* This word, which is now rare, if not obsolete, is explained *streams* on the margin of Mr. M'Lagan's copy.

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Bright was the glow of his manly countenance,
As bent on valour he issued forth to the conflict.
The hosts poured toward us,
As the flowing ocean to a red-rock point of land,
We raised our swords against them
In the face of their standards.
Blood showers from the deep wounds of bodies;
Swords strike with fury;
Red-shafted spears are stained with gore;
And shields fall in splinters.
Fire pours from contending arms
As a stream of metal from the furnace.
Gaul moved on with defying courage,
Eager for blood and destruction.
Such was his course in the field
As a whirlwind, or mist that is drifted along the mountains.
Many were the heroes who sunk under frequent wounds
From the heavy, felling, strokes
Which were dealt by Gaul the son of Morni, son of Nêman,
It were difficult to relate
The numbers that fell in the battle
When destruction came upon them.
I Ossian, now left behind the heroes,
Bore a shield in the furious strife,

---

fought. Man met with man, and steel with steel. Shields sound, and warriors fall. As a hundred hammers on the red son of the furnace, so rose, so rung their swords!

Gaul rushed on, like a whirlwind in Ardven. The destruction of heroes is on his sword.—How can I give to the song the death of many spears? My sword rose high, and flamed in the strife of blood. Oscar, terrible wert thou, my best, my greatest son! I rejoiced in my secret soul, when his sword flamed over the slain. They fled amain

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Ach an diu ge beag mo rath'
Is mi 'n dara cath bha ar thùs (*d*).
Mar ruadh bhuinne srotha
Bhi Oscar ag casgairt (*e*).
Bu chosmhail re toirm an fhàslaich
Sinn a dol in dàil a ghniomh (*f*).
Mar na clacha glasa garbha
A tearna sios ar gleann Lòchrai,
B' amhlaidh sin ar beum sa chòrag (*g*).
Buill' Oscair chluinnear a sgatha
Na naimhde mar ghèagaibh bàraich (*h*).

* * *

Ard aigne Ghuill, Fearcògaidh Fhinn
Fear rogha nan each, fulangach nach tiom (*i*),
Buan rùn an fhir, buaidh chòraig air
Leimneach a ghath, euchdach a stair.
In cogadh [nan] righ min lag a lamh (*k*),
Colg nimhe re leadairt chorp
Ag laoch leugbhalach na mor olc (*l*).
Rèim an righ-churaidh
Mar lèim làn teinmhidh (*m*).
Ar do laimhse, Ghuill ghruamaich,
Cha tig duine beo uaithi,
Cha teid geill Ghuill no Gharaidh

through Lena's heath. We pursued and slew. As stones that bound from rock to rock; as axes in echoing woods; as thunder rolls from hill to hill, in dismal broken peals; so blow succeeded to blow, and death to death, from the

(*d*) Sir G. M'Kenz. NO. IV. p. 4.
(*e*) Mr. Malc. M'Don. p. 19. st. 44.
(*f*) Kenn. p. 9. st. 1.
(*g*) Id. p. 126. st. 7. & Coll. I. p. 75. st. 6.
(*h*) Kenn. Coll. I. p. 35, 36. st. penult.
(*i*) Mr. M'Lag. p. 97. st. 1. & p. 99. st. 5.
(*k*) Id. p. 97.
(*l*) Id. p. 82. st. 3.
(*m*) Ew. M'Phad. *Gall.*

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And though feeble be my effort to-day,
I was second in the front of the battle,
Like a flood-swelled torrent
Oscar bore down the foe.
Like the sounding peal of the desart
Onward we spread in our path.
Like the gray rugged stones which bound from aloft
Into the valley of Lochrie,
So descended our blows in the battle.
The strokes of Oscar hewing down the enemy,
Were heard like the lopping of green branches.

* * *

High-minded Gaul, who fights the battles of Fingal, [ger.
Warrior of chosen steeds, bearing hardship and despising dan-
Firm is the purpose of the chief; conquest attends his combat.
High-bounding he is in valour, deadly in tumult;
Strong of arm in the warfare of kings.
Hero of piercing weapons, disabling bodies,
When he deals the battle of grievous ills.
The course of the kingly warrior
Is as the full-darting meteor.
By that hand of thine, O frowning Gaul!
No man shall escape from it alive.
No captive taken from Gaul or Gara
[illegible]
hand of Oscar and mine.

* * *

Ullin spoke to the king of swords. "Son of the chief of generous steeds! high-bounding king of spears! Strong arm in every perilous toil. Hard heart that never yields. Chief of the pointed arms of death. Cut down the foe; let no white sail bound round dark Inistore. Be thine arm like thunder. Thine eyes like fire, thy heart of solid rock. Whirl round thy sword as a a meteor at night; lift thy shield like the flame of death. Son of the chief of generous

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An aon luing re mac allamharaich (*n*).

* * *

Thionoil an Fhiann as gach àird (*o*)
Re Fionn Ghaidheal nan arm neart (*p*),
Dea mhac Chumhail bu gheal gnùis || (*q*) || *a gnùis ghèig*
Anns gach iul mar lasair neal (*r*).
Labhair an sin an rìgh uasal
Le neart suairce mar bu chubhaidh (*s*);
" Gath-greine mhic Chumhail re crann
Biodh gàir chatha ga hiomain (*t*).
A Ghuill mhic Morn' nam beuman (*u*)!
Oscair, a thrèin || gach gàbhai (*x*)! || *treun*
A Chonail nach lag lamh (*y*)!
A Dhiarmaid duinn is fearr àgh (*z*)!
Oisen ionmhuin 's binne glòir
Na eoin chioill re teachd an lò (*a*)!
Sgaoilibh uaibh mechrith chatha
'S bibh re 'r feum in gleus nan cathan (*b*).
Thog sinn Deo-grèine re crann,
Bratach Fhinn 's bu gharbh a grĕas (*c*),
Lomlàn do chlachaibh ann òr;
'S ann linn fein bu mhòr a meas (*d*).
Thog sinn amach do fhulang dòrain

steeds, cut down the foe. Destroy! Ib. p. 290,—292.]

* * *

Fingal, like a beam from heaven, shone in the midst of his people. His heroes gather around him. He sends

(*n*) Mr. M'Lag. p. 100. st. 3, 5.
(*o*) Mr. M'Donald, Staffa, p. 18. st. 2.
(*p*) Sir Jo. Sincl. p. 5, col. 1. st. 3.
(*q*) Ld. Bannat. Err. p. 5. st. 6.
(*r*) Kenn. p. 132. st. 7.
(*s*) Mr. M'Donald, Staffa, p. 4. st. 2.
(*t*) Fletch. p. 60. st. 2, 3.
(*u*) Mr. M'Lagan, p. 86, 87. st. 4, 7.
(*x*) Kenn. Coll. I. p. 95. st. pen.
(*y*) Mr. M'Lag. p. 77. st. 8.
(*z*) Kenn. p. 158, 115. st. 1, 2.
(*a*) Id. Coll. I. p. 117. st. 3.
(*b*) Id. ib. p. 155. st. 1.
(*c*) Mr. M'Farl. p. 11. st. 4.
(*d*) Gen. M'Kay, Po. IV. st. 30.
(*e*) Kenn. p. 17. st. 2, 4.

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Shall ascend the same ship with a son of the sea-borne foe.

* * * *

His warriors assembled from every quarter,
Around Fingal of the weapons of strength,
The renowned son of Comhal,
Whose countenance shone around as a flame from heaven.
Then spoke the high-descended king
With generous voice of power, as became him.
" Let the sun-beam of the son of Comhal be set to its staff;
And let the shout of battle accompany it.
O Gaul, son of Morni of wounds!
Oscar, champion of each perilous trial!
Conal, arm of might!
Brown-haired Dermid of fortunate deeds!
Courteous Ossian, who art sweeter of voice
Than birds of the wood at early morn!
Spread before you the dismaying quake of battle,
And exert your force in the conflict of armies!"
We reared the sun-beam to its staff,
The standard of Fingal, of furious sweep,
Full-studded with stones in gold;
With us it was held in high respect.
We turned out the standard of young Fergus my brother,

---

forth the voice of his power. " Raise my standards on high; spread them on Lena's wind, like the flames of an hundred hills! Let them sound on the winds of Erin, and remind us of the fight. Ye sons of the roaring streams, that pour from a thousand hills, be near the King of Morven! attend to the words of his power! Gaul, strongest arm of death! O Oscar, of the future fights! Connal, son of the blue shields of Sora! Dermid of the dark-brown hair! Ossian king of many songs, be near your father's arm!" We reared the sun-beam of battle; the standard of the king! Each hero exulted with joy, as, waving, it flew

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Bratach Fhearghais òig mo bhràthar,
Agus bratach gach àrd cheannaird
Bh' anns na cathanaibh san àm sin (e).
Do labhair Fionn flath nan cuach (f),
" Mor an call duinn bhi nar tosd,
Gun chath fuilteach làidir searbh
Tho'irt do righ Lochlain nan calg sean (g),"
" Seachd altramain an Lochain lain,"
Sè labhair Goll gun fhàs cheilg (h),
" Ge mòr an dòigh as an sluagh,
Buidhni mise buaidh am feirg (i)."
Thu'irt ant Oscar bu mhòr brìgh (k),
" Coisgear leam rìgh Innsetoir (l)."
An sin labhair Conal aris,
" Diongamsa rìgh Innse-con (m)."
" Iarla Muthan * mòr nan long (n),"
Labhair Diarmad donn nan con (o),
" Coisgi mi gu mòr a theuchd (p),
No tuiti mi fein ar a shon (q)."
Se'n roghain a ghabh mi fein (r),
Ged tha mi gun trèine nochd,
Rìgh Tearman nan còrag teann

on the wind. It was studded with gold above, as the blue wide shell of the nightly sky. Each hero had his standard too; and each his gloomy men!

(e) Kenn. p. 17. st. 2, 4. (f) Ld. Bannat. Err. p. 6. st. 3.
(g) Gen. M'Kay, Po. IV. st. 21. (h) Mr. M'Donald, Staffa, p. 20. st. 5.
(i) Mr. M'Farl. p. 11. st. 3. (k) Gen. M'Kay, Po. IV. st. 24.
(l) Mr. Malc. M'Don. p. 10. st. 28. (m) Mr. M'Don. Staffa, p. 20. l. st.
(n) Kenn. Coll. l. p. 17. st. 2. & Mr. M'Farlane, p. 11.
(o) Mr. M'Don. Staffa, p. 21. st. 1. (p) M'Farl. p. 11. st. 4.
(q) Mr. M'Don. Staffa, p. 21. st. 1. (r) Gen. M'Kay, Po. IV. st. 25.

* See Note IV.

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To bear the fierce affray,
And the standard of each leading chief
Who was in the host at the time.
Thus spoke Fingal, king of shells,
" Great will be our loss, if we delay
To give battle, bloody, fierce, and firm,
To Lochlin's king of inveterate resentment."
" The seven chiefs bred at the lake of Lano,"
Said Gaul without hollow guile,
" Though great be their confidence in their host,
I shall humble in the height of their ire."
Said Oscar, great in might,
" By me shall be subdued the king of Inistore."
Then spoke Conal next,
" May I be match for the king of Iniscon."
" The great Earl Muthan of ships,"
Said the brown-haired Dermid of hounds,
" I will subdue, though great be his deeds of valour,
Or fall, myself in his place."
The choice which was made by me,
Though I am without strength to-night,
Was to sever the head from the body.

" Behold," said the king of generous shells, " how Lochlin divides on Lena!—Let every chief among the friends of Fingal take a dark troop of those that frown so high: Nor let a son of the echoin groves, bound on the waves of Inistore!"

" Mine," said Gaul, " be the seven chiefs, that came from Lano's lake. " Let Inistore's dark king," said Oscar, " come to the sword of Ossian's son." " To mine the king of Iniscon," said Connal. " heart of steel!" " Or Mudan's chief or I," said brown-haired Dermid, " shall sleep on clay-cold earth." " My choice, though now so weak and dark, was Terman's battling king; I promised

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Is gu sgarain a cheann o chorp (*s*).
" Beiribh beannachd, beiribh buaidh (*t*) !"
Do radh mac Chumhail nan ruag àigh,
" Manos fuileach nan triath garg
Coisgi mise ge mòr fhearg (*u*)."
Mar gharbh ghaotha nan àrd bheann
Ag èirneadh 'n am mor ghreann (*x*)
Sinn a dol in tùs na teugbhail.
Dhearg sinn ar sleaghan gu luath
'S ar lanna leathan làn-chruaidh (*y*).
Féinn Ghaidhealach nan cõrag teann,
Fhuair iad buaidh ar chlannaibh Gall,
'S tra chrom iad an cinn sa chath
Gun d'rinn gach flath mar a gheall (*z*),
Ar iartas beoil mhic Chumhail (*a*)
Thuit iad mar dhoire gun bhlàdh (*b*).
Ionmhuin bhàn bu ghile cneas (*c*)
[Na] eala àluin an uchd bhàin
A snàmh le sprèighich ar bhar thonn (*d*)!
'S tu ag èisteachd re fuaim nan gleann (*e*);
A ghrian dorcha le nèalaibh,
Nach dean gàr ar beinn nan sèimh ghleann (*f*);
Neoil bhorb ar colbh nan speur (*g*),

with my hand to win the hero's dark-brown shield."
" Blest and victorious be my chiefs," said Fingal of the

(*s*) Mr. M'Don. Staffa, p. 21. st. 2. (*t*) Id. ib. st. 3.
(*u*) Mr. Malc. M'Don. p. 11. st. 31. & M'Farl. p. 11. st. 1.
(*x*) M'Intosh, p. 4. st. 1. (*y*) Mr. M'Don. Staffa, p. 14. l. st.
(*z*) Gen. M'Kay, Po. IV. st. 82. and Mr. Malc. M'Donald, p. 12. st. 38.
(*a*) Kenn. Coll. I. p. 135. st. 4. (*b*) Sir G. M'Ken. No. III. p. 6. st. 1
(*c*) M'Farl. p. 50. st. 3. (*d*) Capt. M'Don. Breck. p. 34. st. 1, 3.
(*e*) Kenn. Coll. I. p. 133. st. 1. and Ar. M'Callum, p. 8. st. 3.
(*f*) Kenn. Coll. I. p. 139. st. 7. (*g*) Kenn. p. 109. st. 6.

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Of Terman's king of arduous battles."
" Be ye blest, be ye victorious!"
Said the son of Comhal of conquering pursuits,
" Bloody Mânos of ferocious chiefs,
I shall subdue, though great be his rage."
Like furious winds from the lofty mountains,
When they divide their darkly-frowning force,
We advanced to the strife of death.
We soon reddened our spears
And our broad full-tempered swords.
The Fingalians of close battles
Were victorious over the sons of the race of strangers,
And while they lowered their heads in battle,
Each chief fulfilled his promise.
At the commanding voice of the son of Comhal,
They fell like a grove which had ceased to blossom.
Lovely fair, whose bosom was whiter than the breast of the swan,
When stately swimming
She parted the waving flood!
Thou wert listening to the sound of the vallies;
The sun become darkened with clouds,
Ceased to gladden the mount of the silent vale;
Lowring pillars forming along the skies,

---

mildest look. " Swaran, king of roaring waves, thou art the choice of Fingal!"

Now, like an hundred different winds that pour through many vales; divided, dark the sons of Selma advanced, Cromla echoed around! How can I relate the deaths, when we closed in the strife of arms! O daughter of Toscar! bloody were our hands! The gloomy ranks of Lochlin fell, like the banks of the roaring Cona! Our arms were victorious on Lena: each chief fulfilled his promise! Beside the murmur of Branno thou didst often sit, O maid! thy white bosom rose frequent, like the down of the swan

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Sine ag imeachd ar sliabh
Is fuaim oir in ceannaibh shlat (k),
Tuairneadh tiche dhorcha dhoirin (l).
O an speur thig uisg' is gaoth,
Teine baoghalach is mòr fiamh (m),
Na chaoiribh dearg mar bhara-lassair (n),
Nuair a bhi an aghain na feirg
Ag dol asios na buinnibh bras (o).
B'e sin an cõrag creuchdach garg,
A ribhin nan geala-ghlac (p)!
Ged bhiodh cuan 's mac alla * bheann
Ag eughach, b' fhann seach a ghàir (q).
A nighean donn na mala mine (r)!
Na faicear do dheoir a bhos (s)
Ar tfhine is ar do dhaoine (t);
Bha mnai o an fhairsrich gulach (u).
Ar a fhadhairtea' le sail
Bha mac an Luin in laimh Fhinn (x).
Bha claidhmhean soc re soc
A leadairt chorp agus sgiath (y).
Tha mi anois gu dubhach
Gun charaid gun chath aco-shubhach (z),
Mar chrann crion an fasach fuar

---

when slow she swims on the lake, and side-long winds blow on her ruffled wing. Thou hast seen the sun retire, red and slow behind his cloud: night gathering round on the mountain, while the unfrequent blast roared in the narrow

(k) Ar. M'Call. p. 8. st. 1.
(l) Mr. Malc. M'Don. p. 7. st. 5.
(m) Kenn. Coll. I. p. 171. st. 4.
(n) Mr. M'Don. Saffa, p. 72. st. 8.
(o) M'Callum, p. 8. st. 2.
(p) M'Intosh, st. 11, 25.
(q) Kenn. Coll. I. p. 68. st. 2.
(r) Sir G. M'Kenz. No. III. st. 5.
(s) M'Callum, p. 5, st. 2.
(t) Kenn. p. 122. st. 5.
(u) Id. p. 27. st. 7.
(x) Mr. M'Lagan, p. 40. st. 3.
(y) Id. p. 74. st. 4.
(z) Kenn. Coll. I. p. 35. 4 st.

* MAC ALLA, i. e. *son of the rock*, is a Gaelic expression for ROCK.

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The rack moving on the mountain,
And twigs bending their heads to the blast of the east,
Forebode the dark and stormy night.
Wind and rain descend from the sky,
And lightning with pointed flash,
Attends the fiery bolts of dreadful destruction,
While the river raging high
Pours along its rapid current.
Such was the fierce battle of wounds,
O maid of the whitest hands! [gether,
Tho' ocean and the mountain son of the rock should roar to-
Their noise would come short of its din.
Brown-haired maid of the mildest brow!
Let not thy tears be seen to fall
For thy kindred, or thy tribe;
The women of a distant land* have wept.
Sated with blood was the son of Luno
In the hand of Fingal.
Swords turning the points of swords,
Cut down bodies and shields.
[But] now I mourn in darkness,
Without either battle or friend;
Like a blasted tree in the unsheltered wild,

---

vales. At length the rain beats hard: thunder rolls in peals. Lightning glances on rocks! Spirits ride on beams of fire! The strength of the mountain-streams comes roaring down the hills. Such was the noise of battle, maid of the arms of snow! Why, daughter of Toscar, why that tear? The maids of Lochlin have cause to weep! The people of their country fell. Bloody were the blue swords of the race of my heroes! But I am sad, forlorn, and

* Fhairsrich of the original, is a word not known to the translator; nor are his MS. Dictionary and Glossaries now at hand to lead him to the certain meaning of it. He has rendered it *distant land*, merely from a presumption of its etymology.

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An dèigh càch 's mo dhuilleach tha 'irt uam (*a*).
A ribhin fharasta bheoil bhinn (*b*)
Guilse maseach leam (*c*)!

* * *

Co dhiongas in cõrag sluaigh
Armailt allmhaidh èitidh chruaidh (*d*),
A chuireas crith ar bratach chèad (*e*),
A choisgeas euchd nan coimheach (*f*)?
Fionn Ghaidheal nan arm nocht (*g*),
Leis an coisgtea 'n cruaidh chõrag (*h*):
Mar ghath rinne na lasrach (*i*),
Mar shruth neartor ameasg nàmhan (*k*),
Mar ghaoth ĕaraich ro || lon slèibhe (*l*). || *no*
Tachrai mac Cumhail nan cuach
Is dea righ Lochlain nan gruaidh dearg
Re chèile in tuiteam ant shluaigh (*m*).
Dhèirigh frith is fearg is fraoch
Ar dà mhalai an da mhorlaoich (*n*).
Gum be sud an turleam teann
Mar dheann || a bheire da ord (*o*). || *gbreann*
Bhriste an sgiath ar an leirg (*p*),
Gun d' thilg iad an airm re làr,

---

blind: no more the companion of heroes. Give, lovely maid, to me thy tears. I have seen the tombs of all my friends! Ibid. p. 293,—295.

* * *

But behold the King of Morven! He moves below like

(*a*) Ibid. Coll. I. p. 83. l. st.
(*b*) Ibid. p. 8. st. 3.
(*c*) Mr. M. M'Don. p. 11. st. 35.
(*d*) Kenn. p. 154. st. 7.
(*e*) Id. p. 156. st. 2.
(*f*) Id. p. 154. st. 6.
(*g*) Mr. M. M'Don. p. 7. st. 3.
(*h*) Kenn. Coll. I. p. 37. st. 4.
(*i*) M'Farl. p. 65. st. 1.
(*k*) Kenn. p. 120. l. st.
(*l*) Id. p. 9. st. 2.
(*m*) Sir Jo. Sinel. p. 10. col. 1. st. 5.
(*n*) Sir G. M'Ken. No. II. p. 10,
(*o*) Mr. M'Don. Staffa, p. 22. st. 4.
(*p*) M'Farl. st. 4.

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Bereft of leaves and partners.
Gentle maid of melodious voice,
Mourn with me in thy turn!

* * *

Who is he that in the conflict of hosts,
Subdues the fierce and hardy bands of war;
Who causes the standards of hundreds to tremble;
And stays the valorous atchievement of the foe?
Fingal of the drawn weapons,
Who makes furious battle to cease.
[He is] like a beam of flaming fire;
Like a whelming stream among his enemies;
Like the blast of spring along the tender grass of the moun-
The son of Comhal of shells, [tain.
And Lochlin's famed king of the ruddy cheeks,
Meet together, amidst the falling of their people.
Wrath, rage, and fury
Rose on the brows of both the heroes.
Severe was then the contest
Like unremitting strokes from two hammers.
Their shields were broke down on the field;
They flung their weapons to the ground;

---

a pillar of fire. His strength is like the stream of Lubar, or the wind of the echoing Cromla; when the branchy forests of night are torn from all their rocks! Happy are thy people, O Fingal! thine arm shall finish their wars.—Armies tremble at the sound of thy steel.—Who is that so dark and terrible—who but Starno's son to meet the King of Morven?—

Such were the words of Connal, when the heroes met in fight. There was the clang of arms! there every blow like the hundred hammers of the furnace? Terrible is the battle of the kings; dreadful the look of their eyes. Their dark-brown shields are cleft in twain. Their steel flies,

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Is thug iad gu spàirn an dà laoch (*q*).
Talamh agus clacha trom
Ag osparnaich fo bhonn an cos (*r*),
Croinn draighnich an ear 's an iar;
'S ann linne bu chian an cath (*s*).
Leag Fionn righ Lochlain an àigh
Am fianais chàich ar an raon,
Is airsan ge mich || b'onair righ, || *ger am*
Chuirthe ceangal nan tri chaol (*t*).

* * *

'S binn guth duthuin || a tir an oir, || *dhùin*
'S binn a coill a chanas na heoin;
'S breagh am faghar a nith ghaoth,
'S binn guth laoigh 's e gairm a beinn;
Is || breagh an dearla nith ghrian, || *Nach*
'S gur binn o 'n iar guth an loin.
" Cha leas || cadal [ar] Fionn gu moch *Coil les*
'N am leigeil nan con re fiadh."
Shuidh Fionn fein agus Bran
Ar ant shrath a bha fu 'nt shliabh,
Shuidh gach feinn again ar tom seilg
Gus an d'eirigh sgeilg na fiadh.
Leig sinn ar tri mile cu
Bu mhor lùgh is bu ghorg,
Is mharbh gach cu dhiubh dà fhiadh

broken, from their helmets. They fling their weapons down. Each rushes to his hero's grasp: their sinewy arms bend round each other: they turn from side to side, and strain and stretch their large spreading limbs below. But when the pride of their strength arose, they shook the hill with their heels. Rocks tumble from their places on high; the green-headed bushes are overturned. At length

(*q*) Mr. M'Don. Staffa, p. 22. st. 5. (*r*) Gen. M'Kay, st. 37.
(*s*) M'Pher. p. 22. st. 5. (*t*) Gen. M'Kay, st. 38.

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And in each other grasped the two heroes.
Earth and heavy stones
Shook, struggling, under their heels,
And trees of thorn on either side;
Wearisome to us was their fight.
Fingal laid Lochlin's king of valour low,
In presence of all on the dusky heath,
And he bound him, neck, wrists, and ankles,
Though that was not honour meet for a king.

* * *

Pleasant is the sound of the black wave that comes from the eastern land,
Sweetly the birds sing from the wood,
Delightful is the springing breeze,
And pleasant is the voice of the fawn on the mountain;
Delightful is the shining of the sun,
And sweet from the west comes the note of the blackbird.
"It is not fit to sleep," said Fingal, "in the early morn,
When it is time to let slip the hounds for chace."
Fingal himself took his station with Bran
In the valley below the mountain,
And each party of us was stationed on a hunting hill
Till the deer began to start.
We let loose our three thousand hounds
That excelled in fleetness as in fierceness,
And each hound killed two deer

---

the strength of Swaran fell: the king of the groves is bound. Fingal, Book V. p. 301,—303.

* * *

Morning trembles with the beam of the east;—"Call," said Fingal, "call my dogs, the long-bounding sons of the chace. Call white-breasted Bran, and the surly strength of Luath!—The shrill sound spreads along the wood. The sons of heathy Cromla arise. A thousand dogs fly off at once, gray-bounding through the heath. A deer fell by

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Seal mun deachai iall ar àird.
Mharbh Bran is e na chuilen
Fiadh agus uibhir re càch (w).

Before the leash was prepared for him.
Bran, though but a whelp,
Killed a deer more than each of the rest.

---

every dog; three by the white-breasted Bran. Fingal, Book VI. p. 326, 327.

(w) Bethoc, p. 12,—15.

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NOTES.

I. ORDA, Lat. *ordo*, has its root in ÒRD, a cut, portion, or division; and is, consequently, one of the multitude of words, which the most approved judges of language, from the days of Quintilian to our own, have remarked to be borrowed by the Latin from the Celtic. Foreign words, says the Roman Rhetorician, have come in from almost all nations; but the Gallic have prevailed the most, as, for instance, rheda and petoritum. "Peregrina porro ex omnibus propè dixerim gentibus—venerunt.—Plurima Gallica valuerunt, ut rheda ac petoritum*." And though the general structure of the Latin, as remarked by the same writer (L. I. c. 6.) was planned on the model of the Eolian Greek, Mr. Edward Lhuyd, who appears from his ARCHÆOLOGIA, to be the ablest Philologist of the British, or any other nation, has proved to the satisfaction of the learned, that it borrowed the elegant flection of its verb from the Celtic. "Non tamen vocabula tantum aliqua, sed præcipuam symmetriam, et elegantiam linguæ suæ, in verborum formatione sitam, ut Lluydus (Letter to the Bishop of Hereford, p. 268) bene observavit, Latini ab hac Occidentali lingua mutuo acceperunt†."

The reason why the words and structure of the Celtic language appear so conspicuous in the Latin cannot escape

* M. Fab. Quintil. Institut. orat. Lib. I. c. 9.

† Reverend. admodum in Christo Pat. Gul. Nicholsonii Episc. Cairleolens. Dissertat. de universis totius orbis linguis apud Chamberlayne Orat. Dominic. Amstelod. 1715.

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any one who is tolerably versant in the history of ancient Italy.—The Umbri whom Pliny (Lib. III. c. 14.) and Florus (Lib. I. c. 17.) consider as the most ancient people of Italy, are expressly declared to have sprung from the old Gauls, by Solinus (Cap. II.), and by Servius (ad Æneid. XII.)*; the former appealing to the authority of Bocchus, and the latter relying on Marcus Antonius' evidence. And, according to Dionysius of Halicarnassus (L. I.), their extent of population and territory entitled them, no less than their high antiquity, to vie with the principal nations of Italy.

Besides these primitive settlers, who must have come directly from the East, as the first migration from Gaul to Italy did not happen, according to Livy (Lib. V. c. 33.) till the reign of the elder Tarquin (A. A. C. 588.), the strong and numerous colonies of Celts which thenceforth crossed the Alps, possessed themselves of the most fruitful and pleasant portion of Italy (Polyb. Lib. II. c. 14, 15, 16.), from the foot of the mountains to the coast of the Adriatic sea. Whence the names of Cisalpine Gaul, and *Ager Gallicus*, which were given to that tract of country, either in whole, or in part.

While the Celtic language was thus established in Italy by its first inhabitants, and renewed, or extended, by succeeding colonists, the Latin had not acquired any fixed or permanent form. For Polybius, who died about 120 years before the beginning of the Christian era, informs us (Lib. III. c. 22.), that the ancient Latin was so different from what was spoken in his time, that such as knew it best, found it extremely difficult to explain some parts of it; and that he himself delivered with some degree of doubt, the interpretation of the first treaty between the Romans and Carthaginians, which was concluded at the commence-

* Apud. C. Salmasii Plinian. Exercitat. in C. Julii Solini Polyhistor, Cap. II. p. 49.

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ment of the Consular Government (A. A. C. 505.) So late even as the year 260 before the Christian era, when the *Columna rostrata* was erected, the Roman language, as appears from the inscription upon it (Graev. Thesaur. Ant. Rom. Tom. IV. p. 1810.) differed widely from what it was afterwards in the age of Julius Cæsar. And it deserves our special notice that its ablative case bears the genuine Celtic form—Pucnandod, Prædad, instead of Pugnando, Præda. It is also a singular coincidence that although the Gaelic orthography has hitherto preserved the concluding *d*, it is never sounded—Cogadh, creachadh, being universally pronounced Coga, creacha. And it may be remarked, that the more ancient form of the Latin genitive of the first declension—Aulai, Pennai—is purely Gaelic; the genitive case of Măla, Fionna, being Mălai, Fionnai.

As the Romans were gradually extending their dominion over the states of Italy, and uniting themselves with its several nations, they seem (Quintil. L. I. c. 9.) to have adopted more or less of the language of each. And as ancient authors (Herodot. Dionys. Halicarnass. Plin. Flor. Tacit.) inform us, that Celts, Siculi or Sicani, Lydians or Tyrrheni, Pelasgi, and Greeks of various denomination, were established there before the Roman state was founded, so, the accuracy of history, in recording this mixture of race, is proved by the mixt aspect of the Latin language; which was formed, in process of time, from many discordant tongues into an harmonious and comprehensive whole. For its groundwork is acknowledged to be the Greek of Eolia, (from which the primitive Romans should seem to have sprung,) into whose polished form the mulitude of Celtic and Oriental roots are so completely moulded, that it requires a critical eye to distihguish them. Ῥωμαῖοι δὲ φωνὴν μὲν οὔτ' ἄκρατον βάρβαρον, οὐδ' ἀπηρίσμενος Ἑλλάδα φθόγγοισι—— "Romani veró sermone nec prorsus barbaro nec absolutè

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Graeco utuntur, sed quodam ex utroque misto cujus major pars est linguae Æolicae. Atque ex tot commerciis hoc solum incommodum acceperunt, quod non omnia vocabula rectè efferunt; caetera vero quae sunt Graeci generis indicia, magis quam ulli alii coloni servant ‡."

But as the Celts were the most ancient and, withal, the most numerous settlers of Italy, the traces of their language, next to the Greek, appear by much the most conspicuous. So that it was with good reason the learned Leibnitz observed, that the Latin language was formed of the Celtic and Greek; and that its origin is best illustrated by the genuine remains of the ancient Celtic, such as it was spoken before the time of Julius Caesar, which he presumes, are to be studied in the language of the Irish, who, from the natural progress of migration, must have derived their descent from the more ancient settlers of the British isle, who came thither from the adjoining continent.—"Itaque lingua Latina ex Celtica Graecaque compesta est. Et quo antiquior est Celtica, hoc melius Latinas origines ex ea illustrari posse putem.—Et cum insulae et peninsulae colonos accipere soleant ex vicina continente, consentaneum est—antiquos Britanniae incolas, quos Wallicos dicunt, multò antiquiorum Oceani Germanici Gallicique incolarum (Cimbrorum fortasse pro parte, unde et Cimbros sese vocant) linguam representare.—Ut ita in Hibernis non Celtae Caesari contemporanei—sed Celtarum Caesari contemporaneorum avi quodam modo nobis exhibeantur. Per patrum autem vel avorum gradus hic intelligo non hominum, sed nationum generationes sive propagationes, qualis fit quoties gens aliqua per magnam migrationem exundat ‖."

‡ Dionys. Halicarn. Lib. 1. sub fin.

‖ Godefred. Gul. Leibnitii Dissertat. philolog. apud Chamberlayn. Orat. Dominic. p. 26, 27. Amstelod. 1715.

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Denique ad perficiendam, vel certè valdè promovendam, literaturam Celticam, diligentius linguae Hibernicae studium adjungendum censeo ¶.

II. STOIRM agrees in meaning with the German *sturm*, and the Dutch and English *storm*, which Minsheu in his Etymological Dictionary, derives from the Latin *sternes* Had that learned author been acquainted with the Celtic, he would have found a happier etymon in *stoirm*, which is itself derived from *toirm*, a loud murmuring noise.

The affinity which a number of Teutonic words bear to the Celtic is, in part, a natural and necessary consequence of the first peopling of Europe, and the near neighbourhood of the Celtic and Teutonic nations in ancient times.

Of the several races of men by which Europe is inhabited, it is certain that the Celtic people were the first who moved westward from Asia, the region to which the uniform evidence of history, whether sacred or profane, refers as the original seat of mankind. For Herodotus, the oldest historian of Europe now extant, has remarked repeatedly (Euterpe, C. 33. Melpom. C. 49.), that the Celtae were possessed, in his time, of the extreme westerly point of the European continent. That they formed settlements in the countries which they passed in the course of their migration from east to west, we may judge by the traces which they left of their name; Strabo having remarked (Lib. XI.) that the old writers of Greece called all the northern nations (meaning those of Asia and Europe alike) by the name of Scythians and Celto-Scythians, and Pliny having given us to understand (L. VI. c. 13.) that the Lytarmis promontory, which is supposed to be the Cape of Oby*, now regarded as the extreme boundary of

¶ Ejusd. Collectan. Etymolog. Vol. I. p. 163.

* *Lytarmis*] hodie capo de Oby, hoc est promontorium Obycum, ab Obyo fl. eo loci in mare sese exonerante dici videre est in Ortel. et Mercatoris tab.

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Europe to the eastward, was stamped with the epithet of Celtic, as was also its westerly point, Cape Finisterre (Id. L. IV. c. 20.).

After the great body of Celts had moved from Germany, in their western progress, across the Rhine, a considerable number continued to dwell in that country. For we learn from Tacitus (de morib. Germ. c. 43, 45.) that the Gallic and British languages, which still distinguish the genuine posterity of the ancient Celts, were spoken so late as the beginning of the second century by the Gothini and Æstyii; and that the Cimbri (Ib. c. 37.), one of the two denominations into which the Celtic family branched out at the earliest period of its history, still continued, though greatly reduced in number, to occupy that portion of Germany from which their renowned ancestors had issued forth in conjunction with the Teutones, 210 years before, to crush four consular armies, and force the Roman republic to the brink of ruin.

So near a neighbourhood, and so long and familiar an intercourse as subsisted between the Celts of Germany and the Teutones, could not fail to affect the language of both. How far that of the former was affected in this way it is impossible to determine, *Moremarusa*, preserved by Pliny (Lib. IV. c. 14.), being the only recorded sample of it. But the extent to which the speech of the latter was enriched in this respect, may be judged of in some measure by the Scots or Irish, and Welch words, which are found in the various dialects of the Teutonic. Some of these are also common to the Oriental languages and the Greek and Latin; so that they may be fairly presumed to have formed a part of the primitive language of Asia, the cradle of our race, and to have been brought from thence by the first

geograpt. *Dalec.* Annot. in C. Plin. Nat. Hist. L. VI. c. 13. p. 394. Lugd. 1669.

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settlers of Europe. Such, for instance, is the word for mother in the Persian, Gaelic, Greek, Latin, and Teutonic.

But the most numerous class are such as are proved to be of Celtic origin by their roots or derivatives being confined to that language, or their kindred and dependents being widely diffused in it. Such are the Teutonic *riech*, and *riki* a kingdom, and *mær* a sorry horse or jade. The former, which is synonimous with the Scots or Irish *righe* and *rioghachd*, has its origin in the Celtic *righ*, which is the Scots or Irish for king, as *ri* and *rhy* are the Welch, *ry* the cornish, and *rue* the armoric†. The latter is allied to the Cornish *marh*, the Welch and Armoric *march*, and the Scots and Irish *mare*, a horse: from which a large family of words has sprung, as for instance, Scots and Irish *marcach* a rider, *marcachd* riding, *marcaich* (imperative mood or root) to ride, *marcasach* abounding in horses, *marchoiling* a horse-race, *marclann* a stable, *marcshluagh* cavalry, *marcachd-shine* a storm of wind and rain, literally the riding of the storm: Welch *marchog*, Cornish *marhag*, Armoric *marhaour*, a horseman or rider; Welch *marchogaeth*, armoric *marhat* to ride; Cornish *march bian* a colt, literally a little horse: But the Teutonic derivatives are confined to *acker mære* a plough-horse, and *schind mære* a worn-out horse. For *marschalk* is not to be reckoned upon, Dr. Hickes, Mr. Ihre, and M. Court de Gebelin, differing in opinion as to its primitive meaning; and the German *marsch*, which denotes the movement of an army, offering fully

† The learned Ihre derives the Swedish and Icelandic *Riki* from *Rik*, which is *potens* in Latin, and is in fact the same with the English *rich*, and the German, Flemish, French, Italian, and Spanish *reich*, *rïc*, *rikhe*, *ricco*, *rico*, whence *riches*, *reichthumb*, *rikedom*, &c. are naturally derived. But as Βασιλεια comes of Βασιλευς, regnum of rex, kingdom of king, and royaume of roy, so *riki* and *riech* are derived in the usual course from rì or righ borrowed from the Celtic by the Teutonic, in which it is the less to be wondered that it has been long since lost, that it has been for ages obsolete even in the Welsh.

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as obvious and natural an etymon as any that has been offered by those learned authors.

The ballance debt of words being so much in favour of the Celtic was a natural and necessary consequence of its speakers being the primitive settlers of Europe; nor can the origin of European languages, whether ancient or modern, be at all explained without the help of this primitive speech. So just is the remark of M. Court de Gebelin, whose opinion must be respected by all who make language a subject of inquiry. "Enfin, voyant les mêmes mots communs aux Celtes et aux Latins, être egalement en usage chez tous les peuples du Nord et chez les Orientaux, on ne sera plus tenté de croire que les Celtes ne les tinrent que des Latins; et la langue Celtique reprendra entre les langues, la place qu'elle y occupa autrefois, et qu'on ne pouvoit lui ôter sans injustice, et sans se brouiller sur l'origine des langues de l'Europe."

III. CROTT is the name of a stringed instrument used of old in Scotland and Ireland, which was the same with the Welch *crwdd* or crwth. For a long time past it has been confined to North Wales, so that the people of that part of the principality have been accustomed to consider it as being exclusively their own, as we learn from the Rev. Mr. Evan Evans' account of it.

"Praeter harpam aliud instrumenti genus sibi peculiare Norwallenses vindicant, quod *crwdd* vocant.—Hoc instrumenti genus ferè in desuetudinem abiit, et *violino* cessit. Ex sex chordis felinis constat, nec eodem modo quo *violinum* modulatur, quamvis a figurâ haud multum abludat: In Sudwallia penitus ignoratur:

Romanusque Lyra plaudat tibi, Barbarus Harpâ,
Graecus Achilliaca, Crotta Britanna canat.
VENANTIUS, Lib. VII. Carm. VIII.[a]

[a] Dissertatio de Bardis, p. 79, 80. in Not. Lond. 1764.

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IV. IARL or earl was, next to king, the title of highest dignity among the northern nations at the earliest period of their annals. It appears from this passage that they used it as early as the age of Ossian, who restricts it to a chief of Lochlin.—*Mormhair* was the highest title of nobility among the ancient Scots, and still continues among the speakers of Gaelic to be applied to earl or lord, as *Bantambor'air* is to countess.

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No. XVI.

AFFIDAVIT

OF ARCHIBALD FLETCHER,

Concerning the Poems delivered by him to the Highland Society.

1. At Edinburgh the nineteenth day of January one thousand eight hundred and one years, in presence of Archibald Menzies, Esq. one of the justices of peace for the county of Edinburgh,

COMPEARED Archibald Fletcher, residenter in Achalader, in Glenorchay, and county of Argyle; who declares That, as he understood the Highland Society of Edinburgh have been making inquiries concerning ancient Galic Poems, particularly those ascribed to Ossian, he has deposited with the Deputy Secretary of the Society a collection of Galic Poems, many of which relate to the atchievements of the tribe or race of Fingal, or of the Fionns, as they are named in the Galic language, and of which poems the declarant

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got copies written in the country from his own oral recitation. Declares, That he is about sixty-six years of age, and that he has heard the song called Ram na Duan na h'Ighinn, recited by several persons in Glenorchay above forty years ago, and about thirty years ago he learnt it by heart from John M'Nicol tenant in Arivean in Glenorchay, who had got the same from Duncan M'Nicol tenant in the same place, his grandfather: That John M'Nicol died about twenty years ago, and was above sixty at his death; and that the said Duncan M'Nicol his grandfather, died about forty or fifty years ago, and was, as he believes, about eighty years of age at his death: That the M'Niools in Arivean, who had been there for ages, were celebrated for reciting songs and poems, particularly the songs or histories of the Fingalian race: That in former times in the declarant's first remembrance, and he believes long before his time, it was the constant amusement or occupation of the Highlanders in the winter time to go by turns to each other's houses in every village to recite and hear recited or sung the Poems of Ossian and other songs and poems; which was particularly the practice of the M'Nicols in Arivean; but that for thirty years back, this practice has been gradually wearing out in Glenorchay, and in every other part of the Highlands with which he is acquainted, so that it scarcely now exists at all any where. He farther declares, That when James M'Pherson was collecting the Poems of Ossian, he applied to the said John M'Nicol, but what songs or poems he got from M'Nicol the declarant does not know, and he recollects seeing M'Pherson on that occasion, at the house of Mr. M'Vean, the minister of Glenorchay. Fletcher farther declares, That he heard the song called Teannachd mor na Feinne, repeated by many persons in the Highlands as far back as he can remember any thing, and that some time ago, he learned it by heart, from John Robertson in Tullochean on Loch-Tay side in

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Breadalbane, Perthshire, from whom he got a written copy of it. He declares, That the song called Losga Tigh Farabirne no Farnail, he heard recited by many people in the country above fifty years ago, and as far back as he can remember any thing, and he is sure he heard it before M'Pherson went about to collect the Poems of Ossian in the country of Glenorchay: That he learnt this poem some time ago from Janet M'Kenrick or Henderson, now residing in Glenfalloch, and that she got it from the said M'Nicols of Arivean. He further declares, the song or poem called Duan a Ghairbh mhic Stairn he heard recited in the country by many persons above forty years ago, and particularly by Finlay M'Kearick or Henderson, in Croitandeor in Glendochart in Perthshire, a very old man, from whom or from John M'Kenrick his uncle in Glenorchay, the said Finlay learnt the song, and that some time ago, the declarant himself learnt this song by heart from John M'Intyre in Stronmialachan in Glenorchay, a man of about sixty years of age, who had it from Duncan M'Intyre who resided near Bunaw, Argyleshire: Declares, That he is certain he heard the song of Garbh mac Stairn recited by many persons as above, long before M'Pherson went about collecting the Poems of Ossian. Declares, That the song called Eachdraidh air Conachar Righ Erin agus teist mhac Righ Bharrachoil, an edition of which M'Pherson has published under the name of Darthula, and which is commonly called in the country, Clann Uisneachain, or the Sons of Usne, he heard recited above fifty years ago by many persons in Glenorchay, particularly by Nicol M'Nicol in Arivean, who resided some time in Achnaladar, and this he thinks, was about ten years before M'Pherson went about collecting the Poems of Ossian. Declares, That in the collection which he has now deposited with the Society, there are several other poems, some of which relating to the actions of the race of Fingal, he likewise heard recited

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very long ago; and declares that the whole collection of poems now left with the Society, consists of one hundred and ninety-four pages. All which is truth, as the deponent shall answer to God.

ARCHIBALD FLETCHER.
ARCHIBALD MENZIES, J. P.

Sworn before me the nineteenth day of January eighteen hundred and one, and I farther attest, that the said Archibald Fletcher, who, although he can write his name, was not able to read the manuscript, recited orally in my presence the whole of the poem called Clann Uisneachan, or Darthula, and part of the first poem called Rann no Duan na Inghinn, which, as I understand Gaelic, I compared with the manuscript, and found to agree; and he declared, that he was able and willing to recite orally the whole of the poems particularly specified in his declaration; and I farther attest, that the above-mentioned manuscript collection of poems is marked by the declarant and me, of this date.

ARCHIBALD MENZIES, J. P.

2. ACCOUNT BY DUNCAN KENNEDY,

Of the Persons from whom he procured the Gaelic Poems purchased by the Highland Society.

Names of Persons by whom the Poems of Ossian have been repeated by way of oral tradition to Duncan Kennedy, beginning his first collection of these Poems in 1774, and ending in 1783.

1. Donald Mac Taggart, at Culgalart, near Turbart, Kintyre.

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2. John Morrison, Kildusglan, near Lochgilphead, Glassrie.
3. Alexander Ferguson, Achnashelich, near Kilmichael, commonly called Alister Gasta.
4. Alexander Mac Lardy-Coranbeg, Craignish, known by the name of Alister Mac Iain.
5. Nicol Mac Intyre, Polunduich, Lorn, near Kilninver.
6. John Mac Dougall, Duninaran, Lochavich, and his brother Allan, known by the name of Alain Ban nan Oran, parish of Dalavich.
7. John M'Phail, Bragleenmore, parish of Kilninver.
8. Malcolm M'Phail, parish of Kilmelford.
9. —— M'Phee, from Glenforsa in Mull, residing in the island of Belnahua, near Easdale.
10. John Mac Lean, from the island of Egg, a strolling beggar, nicknamed *Prionsa an Lin.*
11. Donald Mac Phee, in Glenforsa, in the island of Mull.
12. Hugh Mac Callum, smith, island of Belnahua.
13. Niel [Ban] Mac Larty, a fiddler in Craignish, formerly from the island of Luing.
14. Gilbert Mac Arthur, Kilmichael, Glasrie.
15. John Mac Lean, Dusgie Ardgour, near to Fort-William.
16. John Cameron, commonly called Iain Mac Alain, near ditto.
17. Mary Cameron, or Mari Nighan Eoghain, near High Bridge—

And many other persons that Duncan Kennedy met with on different journeys through Morven, Sunart, and Lochabar, whose names he does not recollect, they being chiefly old and obscure, and from their age, he thinks, few are at this time in life.

DUNCAN KENNEDY.

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No. XVII.

DECLARATION

OF

LACHLAN MAC VUIRICH, in the Original, made at *Torlum* in *Barra*, 9th August 1800.

ANN an tigh Phadraic mhic Neacail in Torlum gairid o Chaisteal Bhuirghi ann an Sioramachd Ionbhairnis, a naoidhe la d'an chiad mhios d'an fhomhar, anns an dà fhichead bliadhna agus naoideg d'a aois, thainig Lachlan mac Nèil, mhic Lachlain, mhic Nèil, mhic Dhõnail, mhic Lachlain, mhic Nèil mhòir, mhic Lachlain, mhic Dhõnail, do shloinne chlann Mhuirich, ann an lathair Ruairi Mhic Nèil tighearna Bhăra, thabhairt a chõdaich, mar is fiosrach eisean, gur e fein ant oehda glùn dèg o Mhuireach a bha leanamhain teaghlaich mhic 'ic Ailen, ceannard chlann Raonail, mar bhardaibh, agus o an àm sin gu robh fearan Staoiligairi agus ceithir peighinean do Dhrimasdal aca mar dhuais bardachd o linn gu linn feadh choig ghlun dèag: Gu do chaill an seatha glun dèag ceithir peighinean Dhrimasdail, ach gu do ghlèidh an seachda glùn dèag

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fearan Staoiligairi fad naoi bliadhna dèag dhe aimsir, agus gu robh a fearan sin ar a cheangal dhoibh ann an còir fhad 's a bhiodh fear do chlann Mhuirich ann, a chumadh suas sloinne agus seanachas chlann Dònail; agus bha e mar fhiachaibh orra, nuair nach biodh mac ag a bhard, gu tugadh e fòghlam do mhac a bhrathar, no d'a oighre, chum an còir ar an fhearan a ghleidhe, agus is ann arèir a chleachdai so fhuair Nial, athair fein, iounsacha gu leugha agus scriobha ĕachdrai agus bàrdachd, o Dhõnal mac Nèil mhic Dhõnail, brathair athar.

Tha cuimhne mhath aige gu robh saothair Oisein scriobht ar craicin ann an glèatanas athar o shinsearaibh; gu robh cuid do na craicin ar an deanamh suas mar leabhraichean, agus cuid eile fuasgailt o chèile, anns an robh cuid do shaothair bhard eile, bhărachd ar saothair Oisein.

Tha cuimhne aige gu robh leabhar ag athair ris an canadh iad an leabhar dearg, do phaiper, thainig o shinnsearaibh, anns a robh mòran do shean eachdrai na fineachan Gaidhealach, agus cuid do shaothair Oisein mar bha athair ag innse dha. Chan eil a haon de na leabhraichean sa ar fhaotain an diu, thaobh is nuair a chaill iad a fearan, gu do chaill iad am misneach agus an dùrachd. Chan eil e cinnteach cid e thainig ris na craicin, ach gu bheil barail aige gu tug Alasdair mac Mhaighsdir Alasdair 'ic Dhõnail ar falbh cuid diubh, agus Raonal a mhac cuid eile dhiubh; agus gu faca e dha na tri dhiubh ag tàileirean ga 'n gearra sios gu criosaibh tomhais: Agus tha cuimhne mhath aige gu tug mac 'ic Ailen ar athair an leabhar dearg a thabhairt seachad do Sheumas mac Mhuirich a Bàidenach; gu robh e gairid o bhi cho tiugh re Biobal, ach gu robh e na b' fhaide agus na bu leatha, ach nach robh ŭrad thiughaid sa chõdach; gu robh na craicin agus an leabhar dearg ar an scriobha anns an làimh an robh Ghaidhlic ar a scriobha o shean ann Albain agus ann Eirin, mun do ghabh daoine cleachda ar scriobha Gaidhlic anns an làimh Shaghsanaich;

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gum b'aithne d'a athair ant shean làmh a leugha gu math; gu robh cuid do na craicin aige fein an dèigh bàis athar, ach thaobh is nach do ionnsaich e iad, agus nach robh adhbhar meas aig' orra, gu deachai iad ar Chall. Tha e ag ràdh nach robh haon do shinnsearaibh ar a robh Paul mar ainm, ach gu robh dithis dhiubh ris an canadh iad Cathal.

Tha e ag ràdh nach ann le haon duine scriobhadh an leabhar dearg, ach gu robh e ar a scriobha o linn gu linn le teaghlach Chlann Mhuirich, bha ag cumail suas seanachais Chlainn Dõnail, agus cheannard na fineachan Gaidhealach eile.

An deigh so a scriobha, chaidh a leugha dha, agus dhaidich e gu robh e ceart ann an làthair Dhõnail mhic Dhõnail, fear Bhaile Ra'ail; Eoghain mhic Dhõnail, fear Gheara-sheilich; Eoghain mhic Dhõnail, fear Ghriminis; Alasdair mhic Ghilleain, fear Hoster, Alasdair mhic Neacail, minister Bheinn bhaoghla; agus Ailen mhic Chuinn, minister Uist Chinn a tua, a fear a scriobh a seanachas so.

comhar
LACHLAN X MAC MHUIRICH.
a làimhe.
RUAIRIE MACHD NEALL, J. P.

TRANSLATION OF THE ABOVE.

IN the house of Patrick Nicolson, at Torlum, near Castle-Burgh, in the shire of Inverness, on the ninth day of August, compeared in the fifty-ninth year of his age, Lachlan, son of Niel, son of Lachlan, son of Niel, son of Donald,

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son of Lachlan, son of Niel *Mòr*, son of Lachlan, son of Donald, of the surname of Mac Vuirich, before Roderick M'Neil, Esq. of Barra, and declared, That, according to the best of his knowledge, he is the eighteenth in descent from Muireach, whose posterity had officiated as bards to the family of Clanronald; and that they had from that time, as the salary of their office, the farm of Staoiligary and four pennies of Drimisdale during fifteen generations; that the sixteenth descendant lost the four pennies of Drimisdale, but that the seventeenth descendant retained the farm of Staoiligary for nineteen years of his life. That there was a right given them over these lands as long as there should be any of the posterity of Muireach to preserve and continue the genealogy and history of the Macdonalds, on condition that the bard, failing of male issue, was to educate his brother's son, or representative, in order to preserve their title to the lands; and that it was in pursuance of this custom that his own father, Niel, had been taught to read and write history and poetry by Donald son of Niel, son of Donald, his father's brother.

He remembers well that works of Ossian written on parchment, were in the custody of his father, as received from his predecessors; that some of the parchments were made up in the form of books, and that others were loose and separate, which contained the works of other bards besides those of Ossian.

He remembers that his father had a book which was called the *Red Book*, made of paper, which he had from his predecessors, and which, as his father informed him, contained a good deal of the history of the Highland Clans, together with part of the works of Ossian. That none of those books are to be found at this day, because when they [his family] were deprived of their lands, they lost their alacrity and zeal. That he is not certain what became of the parchments, but thinks that some of them were carried

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away by Alexander, son of the Rev. Alexander Macdonald, and others by Ronald his son; and he saw two or three of them cut down by tailors for measures. That he remembers well that Clanronald made his father give up the red book to James Macpherson from Badenoch; that it was near as thick as a Bible, but that it was longer and broader, though not so thick in the cover. That the parchments and the red book were written in the hand in which the Gaelic used to be written of old both in Scotland and Ireland before people began to use the English hand in writing Gaelic; and that his father knew well how to read the old hand. That he himself had some of the parchments after his father's death, but that because he had not been taught to read them, and had no reason to set any value upon them, they were lost. He says that none of his forefathers had the name of Paul, but that there were two of them who were called Cathal.

He says that the red book was not written by one man, but that it was written from age to age by the family of Clan Mhuirich, who were preserving and continuing the history of the Macdonalds, and of other heads of Highland Clans.

After the above declaration was taken down, it was read to him, and he acknowledged it was right, in presence of Donald M'Donald of Balronald, James M'Donald of Garyhelich, Ewan Mac Donald of Griminish, Alexander Mac Lean of Hoster, Mr. Alexander Nicolson minister of Benbecula, and Mr. Allan Mac Queen minister of North-Uist, who wrote this declaration.

his
LACHLAN × MAC VUIRICH.
mark.
RODERICK MAC NIEL, J. P.

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No. XVIII.

LETTER

FROM LORD BANNATYNE TO MR. MACKENZIE,

MY DEAR SIR,

In the Report you are preparing for the Highland Society from their Committee appointed to enquire into the nature and authenticity of the Poems given to the public by Mr. M'Pherson under the name of Ossian's, there will be occasion to refer to a set of Gaelic manuscripts, part of a collection which belonged to the *M'Lachlans of Kilbride* in Argyllshire, which I had accidentally been enabled to make known, and in part to bring into the possession of the Society.

Judging it might be material in that Report to make the Society acquainted with the history of that collection, and of the manner in which it fell under my observation, I gladly comply with your request in stating the little I know of its history, and the very accidental manner in which I came to be acquainted with its existence, and to be the instrument of preserving from oblivion what appears to be

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the largest and most valuable collection of Gaelic manuscripts now remaining in the Highlands of Scotland.

The public are no strangers to the desire with which the late *Lord Hailes* was always actuated for informing himself of whatever respected the history and antiquities of this country. The course of my duty, while I was Sheriff of Bute, frequently led me to meet with his Lordship when holding the Circuit Court at Inveraray. On one of these occasions, our conversation turning on the different opinions entertained as to the authenticity of the Poems published by Mr. M'Pherson, his Lordship expressed a particular desire to know how far any Gaelic manuscripts of tolerable antiquity were preserved in the Highlands of Scotland, and particularly, whether any of them contained remains of ancient poetry connected with or similar to those which Mr. M'Pherson had published.

I told his Lordship, that though the gentlemen from the remoter parts of the Highlands of whom I had made such inquiries, talked generally of the existence of manuscripts, and of their belief that some of them, and particularly one or two belonging to the family of Clanranald or the descendants of their bard, had got into the hands of Mr. M'Pherson, yet that I had not been fortunate enough to meet with any persons who had themselves seen or examined such manuscripts, or were able to give me an account of their nature, their supposed antiquity, or contents, excepting Dr. Hugh M'Leod, professor of church history at Glasgow, who had assured me he had seen and examined several Gaelic manuscripts, partly written upon vellum, and apparently of great antiquity, in the possession of Mr. M'Pherson, containing portions of poetry mixed with other compositions. At the same time I informed his Lordship, that I had met with many persons, and some particularly among the clergy, whose taste and judgment I could rely upon, who assured me of their having heard repeated by country

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people various remains of ancient Gaelic poetry generally relative to the same class of heroes, and which they deemed no ways inferior to those translated and published by Mr. M'Pherson. He suggested, that I should make inquiries with regard to Gaelic manuscripts among the gentlemen then attending the Circuit. Having complied with this suggestion, I was directed to the late Mr. M'Intyre of Glenoe, who put into my hands a manuscript, which he mentioned as received from Major M'Lachlan of Kilbride, one of whose predecessors he stated to have been a dignified Ecclesiastic, I think one of the Deans of Argyle about the time of the Reformation, and whose family were said to have retained for a considerable time, a peculiar taste for Gaelic antiquities, in consequence of which they had once possessed a very large collection of Gaelic manuscripts, collected partly in Ireland, and partly in the Highlands of Scotland, and of which part still remained in the possession of Major M'Lachlan.

The manuscript thus obtained from Mr. M'Intyre being inspected by Lord Hailes, he immediately observed that the character denoted it to be of no great antiquity, probably at or a little before the Reformation.—I had its contents examined in presence of Lord Hailes, by Mr. M'Kinnon, then schoolmaster at Inveraray, afterwards minister of Glendaruel; by whom it was found to be a miscellany, containing very heterogeneous matter—a considerable part of a Popish Missal, some translations from Hippocrates and Galen, a calendar, a genealogy of the family of Argyle, and one fragment of Fingalian poetry, if my memory does not fail me, the story of Gealchossa. This manuscript was returned to Mr. M'Intyre, and I do not know if it can be now found.—Remembering, however, this incident, when the Highland Society entered on that investigation, the result of which you are now kindly giving

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your assistance in enabling them to lay before the public, I took occasion, in going to Inveraray, to call on Mr. M'Kinnon at Glendaruel. Reminding him of what had then passed, and asking whether he had himself seen the Kilbride Collection, he told me he had not, but that he had then by him a Gaelic manuscript, got from some country people in his neighbourhood, which had once, they said, made part of that collection, which appeared to him very ancient, and though he could not easily read it on account of its numerous contractions, he found it to contain Histories, Tales, and Poems.

This manuscript, as you know, I prevailed on him to send by me for the use of the Society. It is generally understood to be of considerable antiquity, as the late Mr. William Robertson of the Register Office supposed, not later than the 13th century.

The circumstance of this manuscript also being supposed to come out of the Kilbride collection, induced me to make inquiry, what part of that collection still remained in the possession of Major Mac Lachlan, who was my personal acquaintance. The result you know was, that by means of the Rev. Francis Stuart minister of Craignish, I obtained a confirmation of the fact, that his family had once possessed a very large collection, of which he had given two or three to General Sir Adolphus Oughton, and the late Sir James Foulis, both of whom were Gaelic scholars, and that there still remained above twenty in his possession.

Of these he allowed Mr Stuart to bring a few to my house in Bute for my inspection, all of which appeared to me to be of some antiquity. Those were returned; but, at my request, Mr. Mackintosh was, as you know, allowed to take inspection, and bring the Society an account of these and the other MSS. in Major M'Lachlan's possession. Part of these the major afterwards sent to the Society, and

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the remaining part are not unlikely to be obtained from Capt. Sime of Stuckgarvan, his nephew and heir.

It is foreign to the subject of this letter to enter into particulars now much better known to you and the other members of the Committee than to me, while the examination made by Mr. Donald Smith, with the aid of Mr. Mackintosh, shows their contents to be in many respects curious and interesting. I feel some satisfaction in having been the accidental instrument of bringing under the notice of the Society, and probably preserving from being irrecoverably lost, what is perhaps the most valuable remains of Gaelic manuscript now existing in this country.

I cannot conclude this letter without remarking, that independently of the various accidents to which, even with every care for their preservation, such MSS. as those in question must have been exposed from the destruction of the religious houses at the Reformation, from the subsequent feuds and civil wars, and latterly the two Rebellions, during which the houses and the property of the first families in the Highlands so often suffered devastation and plunder, and their proprietors were driven into exile, or suffered on a scaffold; the state in which this Kilbride Collection was found, exhibits a striking proof of the destruction to which such papers were exposed from the carelessness of their owners; and affords a strong presumption that the MSS. accidentaly recovered, bear a very small proportion to those which once existed in a country where they were equally liable to perish by violence or by neglect. I always am,

My dear Sir,

Your very faithful and obedient Servant,

WM. MACLEOD BANNATYNE.

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No. XIX.

ACCOUNT

Of the PRINCIPAL MANUSCRIPTS now in the Possession of the *Highland Society*, relating to the Subject of the Committee's Inquiries,

BY DR. DONALD SMITH.

THE oldest Manuscript in the possession of the Society appears to be one of the late Major John M'Lachlan's of Kilbride, written on vellum, and marked Vo. A. No. I.

On the margin of its fourth leaf is the following remark: Oidche bealtne ann a coimhtech mo Pupu Muirciusa agus as olc lium nach marunn diol in linesi dom dub Misi Fithil acc furnuidhe na scoile. The English of which is this:— The night of the first of May in the Coenobium of my Pope Murchus, and I regret that there is not left of my ink enough to fill up this line. I am Fithil an attendant on the school.

The sense in which the word Pupu, equivalent to Pope or Papa, is here used, may lead one to form a judgment of the age of the MS. The primitive signification of Papa is Father,

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and in this venerable sense it was applied to Bishops in the early ages of the Church, as we learn from St. Augustin and some succeeding writers quoted by Du Cange under the word *Papa*. In the Eastern Church it was, at one period, given to Abbots, and even to Priests or Presbyters. When the Bishops of Rome acquired the direction of the Western Church, they affected an exclusive right to the title of Pope, which they continued to assume from the time of Leo the First, or Great (A. D. 440—461.), while others received it only as matter of courtesy. So in the Eastern Church, too, it came in process of time to be monopolized by the Patriarchs of Alexandria; which made some Roman Pontiffs take the title of Universal Pope, as John VIII. is styled in the council held at Pavia in the year 876*.

To apply this information to our purpose: The Scots and Picts, as we are expressly informed by Bede, derived their Christian profession from St. John the Evangelist, according to the usage of the Churches of Asia, and the writings of Anatolius, who was Bishop of Laodicea in Syria about the year 280, and wrote, among other works, a learned book on the observance of the Pasch, a fragment of which is preserved by Eusebius†. Their clergy, accordingly, long opposed the peculiar rites and tenets of the Romish Church with so much zeal, that they would not even eat in company with churchmen of that persuasion, whom they, as well as the ancient British and Irish, whose Christianity was derived from the same source, regarded as little better than Pagans‡.

* Carol. Dufresne Domini Du Cange Glossar. ad Scriptor. med. et infim. Latinitat. in Voc. *Papa*.

† Bed. Histor. Ecclesiast. Lib. III. c. 3. 25. Euseb. Pamphil. Hist. Eccles. Lib. VII. c. 31.

‡ Bed. Hist. Ecclesiast. L. II. c. 4. 20.

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The church discipline of this ancient Scots institution differed remarkably from the Romish in this respect, that an Abbot, or even a Presbyter, was equal in authority to a Bishop; though it should seem that by the age of Bede, this privilege was confined to the Abbot of Iona or I Cholum Chille. "That island," says he, "has an Abbot, "who is a Presbyter, for its ruler, to whose direction all "the province, and even the Bishops, contrary to the usual "method, are subject, according to the example of its first "teacher, who was not a Bishop, but a Presbyter and "Monk†." And thence it happened that in the early period of the Scots and Irish Church, *Ab*, *Popa* or *Pupa*, denoted Lord, and Master, as ancient Glossaries of obsolete words inform us ‡.

In 710, Naitan King of Picts, was prevailed upon by a letter from Ceolfrid, Abbot of Girwy, to recommend the Romish observance concerning Easter and the Tonsure to the clergy of his dominions. "The nineteen years circles "or revolutions were sent throughout all the provinces of "the Picts to be transcribed and observed, instead of the "eighty-four years revolutions. All the ministers of the "altar, and the monks, had the crown shorn, and the cor-"rected nation (as Bede expresses it) rejoiced, as being "newly put under the instruction of Peter, the most blessed "prince of the apostles, and to be secured under his pro-"tection *."

In 716, Ecgbercht, an English priest, went from Ireland to Iona, in order to effect the like change in the religious usage of the Scots. The monks of that island, to whom the Church of Scotland was subject, gave him a welcome

† Id. L. III. c. 4.

‡ Lhuyd. Archæolog. Britann. Tit. II. in vocib. Dominus, Magister, et Tit. X in vocib. Ab. Popa.

* Bed. Histor. Ecclesiast. Lib. V cap. 22

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and honourable reception; but it took him thirteen years to accomplish the object of his mission, which was at length effected the 23d of April 729, when Abbot Duncan and the brethren joined him in the celebration of Easter, which fell upon that day by the Romish calculation which they had hitherto rejected. Ecgbercht happening to die that very day, "the brethren rejoiced in the certain and "catholic knowledge of the time of Easter, and in the pro-"tection of the father by whom they had been corrected "departing to the Lord*."

Thus it appears, that by the year 730, all Scotland acknowledged the Papal Pasch and Tonsure, which had hitherto formed a principal subject of controversy. And as her clergy then acknowledged the authority of the professed successor of St. Peter in points which they deemed of the utmost importance, we can scarcely presume that the Bishops, Abbots, or Presbyters, of the succeeding generation would show so little deference to him as either to claim or receive the title of Pope, which the universal consent of the Western Church had long before resigned to him; as is manifest from Bede, a church historian of England in that age, who applies the title of Pope to the Bishops of Rome alone, or, as he terms it, of the Roman and Apostolical See, whose spiritual authority he uniformly represents as supreme from the time of Gregory, who was raised to the popedom in 692, and made the first attempt to reclaim the English from the Pagan superstition of their ancestors†.

There is every reason to believe, then, that the life of Papa Murchus (be he bishop, abbot, or presbyter) in whose cænobium or college our MS. was written, did not extend beyond the close of the eighth century; and if the

* Bed. Hist. Ecclesiat. Lib. V. cap. 23.

† Histor. Eccles. Gent. Anglor. L. I. c. 23. 25. et et passim.

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annexed *fac simile* of its characters in Plate I. Fig. 1, 2, and in Plate II. throughout, be compared with the specimens which M. Mabillon and Mr. Astle have exhibited of the writing of that age, such a belief will be found to be fully warranted *.

The orthography of this MS. also bears evidence of its high antiquity, *u* being employed in it to denote the sound which is uniformly expressed in other MSS. from the ninth century to the sixteenth downward by *b b' b'* or *bh*. Nor should it escape our notice, that the death of a Muredachus, prior of Iona, is marked by the diligent and learned Colgan under the year 777†. For the letter *d* in Muredachus, by the rules of Gaelic orthography, is quiescent, and serves merely to lengthen out the sound, in the manner of a circumflex accent ‡: So that actually the sound of Muredachus is much the same as that of Muirchius.

The title of *prior*, it is observable, existed before priories were erected, and was at times used for abbot; besides which, four several kinds of priors connected with monasteries are described by Du Cange, as *Prior scholae regionariae, Prior major, Prior claustri, Prior conventualis* ||. If the Head of

* See Mabillon DeRe Diplomatica Tab. V. p. 353. 2d part of the 2d specimen, and Tab. IX. And compare the ornamented letters of our MS. Fig. 1, a. of Plate I. hereunto annexed, with those of Mr. Astle's 18th, Plate, No. 1, a. (first edition, of his Origin and Progress of Writing) which were written in the 8th century; and its capital letters, as represented in Plate II. with those which are engraved from MSS. of the 7th and 8th centuries in his 14th, 15th and 18th Plates; attending to the observation which he makes, p. 103. "It is observable, that square or cornered characters were not disused at this time [the 8th century] in the titles of Manuscripts."

† "Anno 777. S. Muredachus, filius Huagalii, Prior Hiensis obiit." Joan. Colgan. Tri. Thaumaturg. p. 500. Lovanii 1647.

‡ "The Mutable are such as by the addition of an *h*, or else by a full point (·) above them, either alter or lose their pronunciation: viz. *ḃ, ċ, ḋ*—. Some — are annihilated, the use of writing them being only to prevent the disguising of the words in case they should have been omitted." Lhuyd's Archæolog. p. 300.

|| Carol. Du Fresne Domini Du Cange Glossar. [illegible]

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the school which Fithil attended was a Prior, he would answer the first of these descriptions. But it is more probable that the Prior of Iona in the eighth century was Prior of Colidei or Culdees, an order of religious which belonged to the churches of Britain and Ireland exclusively. "The "Culdei, or Colidei, were secular priests, and served in the "choir of the cathedral of Armagh; their president was "called the Prior of the college of the Culdei, and was a "precentor to the said church.—A. D. 779, died Kernach, "called the Prior of Armagh *."

The MS. of which it has been thus attempted to determine the age, consists of a poem moral and religious, some short historical anecdotes, a critical exposition of the Tain, an Irish tale, which was composed in the time of Diarmad son of Cearval, who reigned over Ireland from the year 544 to 565; and the Tain itself, which claims respect, as exceeding, in point of antiquity, every production of any other vernacular tongue in Europe.

On the first page of the Vellum, which was originally left blank, there are genealogies of the families of Argyll and Mac Leod in the Gaelic handwriting of the sixteenth century, before or after the middle of which they were written, as appears from the former ending with Archibald, who succeeded to the earldom of Argyll in 1542, and died in 1588. And it is probable that our MS. came about this period into the possession of the Mac Lachlans of Kilbride, as a Ferquhard, son of Ferquhard Mac Lachlan, was Bishop of the Isles, and had Iona or I Colum Kille in commendam from 1530 to 1544†; from which time, almost nearly to the present, they and the Mac Lachlans of Kilchoan,

* Archdall's Monastic. Hibernic. p. 31. For the Colidei or Culdei of Scotland, particularly those of St. Andrew's, Abernethy, Dunkeld, and Monimusk, see Sir James Dalrymple's Historical Collections, p. 122, 236, 244, 281.

† Keith's Catalogue of Scots Bishops, p. 175.

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their relations, have been distinguished for taste and learning.

The Critical Exposition prefixed to the *Tain*, gives a brief account of it in the technical terms of the Scots literature of the remote age in which it was written. "Ceathardha connagur in cach ealathuin is cuincda don tsairsisi na Tana. Loc di cedumus lighe Fercusa mhic Roich ait in rou hathnachd four mach Nai. Tempus umorro Diarmuta mhic Cernailt in rigno Ibeirnia. Pearsa umorro Fergusa mhic Roich air is e rou tirchan do na hecsib ar chenu. A tucaid scriuint dia ndeachai Seanchan Toirpda cona .III. ri ecces . . . do saighe Cuaire rig Condacht."

That is—The four things which are requisite to be known in every regular composition are to be noticed in this work of the Tain. The PLACE of its origin is the stone of Fergus son of Roich, where he was buried on the plain of Nai. The TIME of it, besides, is that in which Diarmad son of Cervail, reigned over Ireland. The AUTHOR, too, is Fergus son of Roich; for he it was that prompted it forthwith to the bards. The CAUSE of writing it was a visit which Shenachan Torbda with three chief bards made to Guaire King of Connacht.

The subject and character of this TAIN *bho Cuailgne* is concisely and justly expressed by Roderic O Flaherty. "Fergusius Rogius solo pariter ac solio Ultoniæ exterminatus, in Connactiam ad Ollilum et Maudam ibidem regnantes profugit; quibus patrocinantibus, memorabile exarsit bellum septannale inter Connactios et Ultonios multis poeticis figmentis, ut ea ferebat ætas, adornatum. Hujus belli circiter medium, octennio ante caput æræ Christianæ, Manda regina Connactiæ, Fergusio Rogio ductore, immensam boum prædam conspicuis agentium et insectantium virtutibus memorabilem, e Cualgnio in agro Louthiano reportavit *."

* Rod. O Flahert. Ogyg. p. 275.

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It appears from the words "Ut ea ferebat ætas," that O Flaherty considered the tale of the TAIN as a composition of the age to which it relates: So that the Critical Exposition prefixed to this ancient copy must have escaped the diligent and successful search that he made for materials to his Ogygia. And as he was the friend and pupil of the family of Mac Firbis, the most learned and intelligent of the professed Antiquarians of Ireland †, there is reason to believe that the Exposition in question, was not only written, but composed in Scotland, and that it was either unknown to the Irish Antiquaries, or overlooked by them.

Be that as it may, it sets forth that Sheanachan, with the three chief bards, and those in their retinue, being called upon for the history of the *Tain bho*, or cattle spoil, of Cuailgne, when they were taking their departure from the Court of Guaire, acknowledged themselves ignorant of it. That they made their grand rounds of Ireland and of Scotland in quest of it, but to no purpose ‡. That Eimin and Muircheartach, two of their number repaired at length to the grave of Fergus son of Roich, who, being invoked, appeared at the end of three days in awful majesty, and recited the TAIN from beginning to end, as it is detailed in the twelve Reimsgeala, or Portions, of which it is made up.

The historical Anecdotes begin with that which is engraved on Plate II. herewith presented, and relates to Ossian the son of Fingal, whom it represents as showing an inclination in early life, to indulge in solitude his natural propensity to meditation and song. It is to be read as follows:

† Rod. O Flaherti. Ogyg. p. 233. Ogygia vindicated in Pref. (viii. ix.)

‡ Cuirsiot na Filidh mor cuairt Ereann agus Alpan dia fochaidhe agus nis bui leo.

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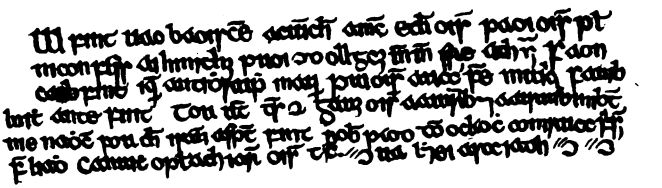

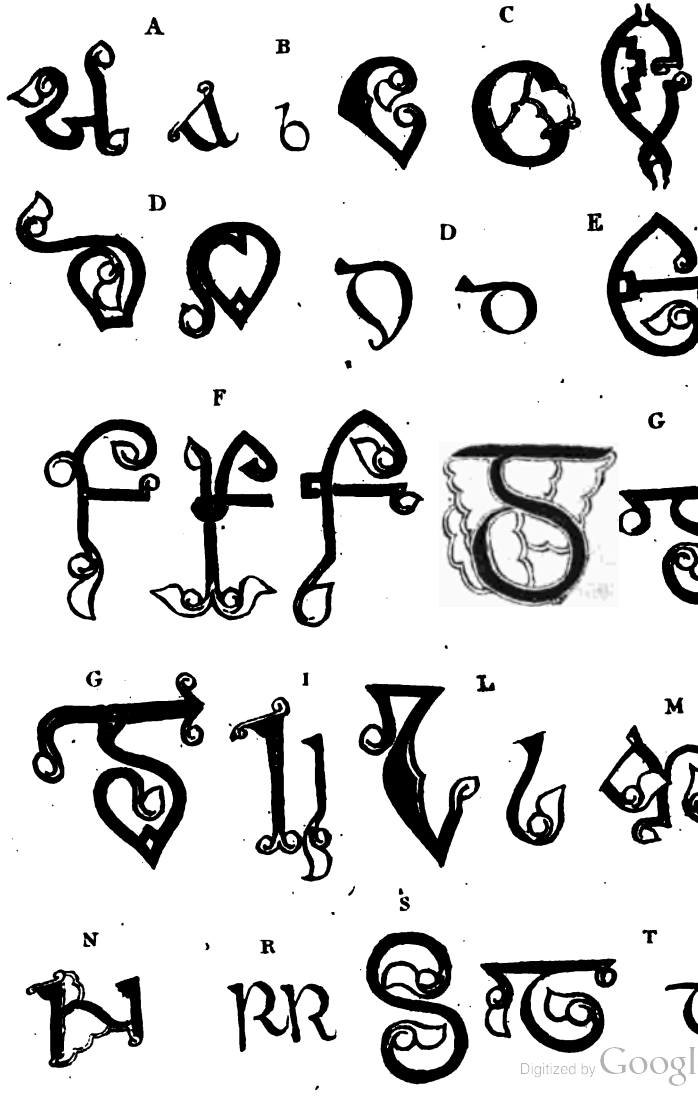

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Fint uao baoiscne a cuinchadh a mbic ethon Oisen Paoi Oisen pliadhin con fess ai himthus puoi cond ollgeus mucmhaich frie athuir Faoncaib Fint iaromh an didhruph maur pui Oisen aucc finne muicei famb luith ante Fint Tou uerit teachd da Gauus Oisen a auirmb agus a airmb imbeart ine nadhtai fou chedoir Is ann aspeart Fint ro badh paod don oclaoch comrucc fris in fear liadh Canuith opladhach iaromh Oisen *dicens* " Con uadh ladh ei a scciadh " Con " Con

That is—Fingal, of the family of Baoiscne, meeting his son, to wit Ossian. Ossian was a year without any notice being had concerning him, until a boar-hunter informed his father. Upon which Fingal repaired to the desart, where Ossian was flaying a boar at the time of his getting there. Fingal sent him a messenger. Ossian instantly took his arms and prepared for an armed resistance. It was then that Fingal said it was hazardous for the lad to engage with the gray-haired hero. Upon which Ossian sung the piece *dicens** " Con uadh ladh ei a scciadh " Con " Con

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Only four more of the Kilbride Collection of MSS. have been communicated to the Society. The first consists of an Almanack finely written on vellum, bound up with a paper list, in verse, of all the holidays, festivals, and most remarkable saints days throughout the year—A treatise on Anatomy, extracted and abridged from Galen with much judgment, and written in a plain and easy style—Observations on the secretion, and on the state and appearance of the Urine in disease, and the judgment to be formed from it—The Schola Salernitana, a well-known work in Leonine verse, which the famous medical school of Salerno drew up for the use of Robert, Duke of Normandy, the son of William the Conqueror, when he was returning, in or

* What follows *dicens* seems to have been the burden of the song which Ossian sung on the above occasion.

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about the year 1100, from the wars of Palestine, where he had received a wound in the right arm, by which his health was greatly impaired. The Latin text is accompanied with a Gaelic explanation, which is at once faithful and elegant, as may be seen by the following specimen:

Caput 1. Anglorum regi scripsit schola† tota Salerni.

.1. As iat scol Salerni go hulidhe do scriou na fearsadh so do chum rig sagsan do choimhed a shlainnte.

Si vis incolumem, si vis te reddere sanum;
Curas tolle graves, irasci crede prophanum.

Madh ail bhidh fallann, agus madh aill bhidh slan; Cuir na himsnimha troma dhit, agus creit gurub dioumhain duit fearg do dhenumh.

Parce mero, cenato parum, non sit tibi vanum
Surgere post epulas, somnum fuge meridianum.

.1. Coigill fin, agus bidh do shuiper bece, agus narob dimhain leat ceiminnach deis na cotach, agus seachain codladh an meoghoin laoi.

Non mictum retine, nec comprime fortiter anum.

.1. Na connuimh ar fhuol, agus na adur feduir.

Hæc bene si serves, tu longo tempore vives.

.1. Da coimheduir na nithe so, bidh aimsir fada ad beathadh.

On the last page of this MS. volume is written *Leabhar Giollacholuim Meigbeathadh* in the very form and hand in which the same words appear on a paper MS. which is bound up with a number of others written upon vellum, in a volume that was presented to the valuable Library of the Faculty of Advocates by the Rev. Donald Mac Queen, late

† In the printed editions it is "scribit tota schola."

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minister of Kilmuir in Skye. In the latter, *Liber Malcolmi Bethune* is written immediately before the words just quoted; both inscriptions bearing that those books were at one time the property of Malcolm Bethune, who was one of a family eminent for learning, that supplied the Western Isles for many ages with physicians, whose diligence and skill are gratefully remembered in the traditionary record of their country.

The second of the Kilbride MSS. consists of a Tale in prose, concerning a King of Lochlin, and the Heroes of Fingal; an Address to Gaul the son of Morni, beginning

Goll mear mileant—
Ceap na Cròdhachta—

An Elegy on one of the Earls of Argyll, beginning

A Mhic Cailin a chosg lochd;

and a Poem in praise of a young Lady.

The writing of this MS. as is noted at the end of it, was finished by Ewan M'Phaill at Dunstaffnage, a castle of Lorn, the 12th October 1603.

The third is a miscellaneous collection of Poems, partly Scots and partly Irish, written by Eamonn, or Edmond, Mac Lachlan, whose name it bears on the 36th and 129th leaf of its remaining contents, as it does the dates of 14° Julii 1654, and ultimo Julii 1655 on the 36th and 79th leaves. The pieces it contains are comparatively modern, and seem unequal in point of poetical merit. The Sonnets, Odes, and Epistles are all excellent: and if the writer of this paper could presume to form an opinion of them, he would venture to say that they yield to no com-

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positions of the kind in any language with which he is acquainted.

The fourth and last MS. of this Collection that has been received by the Society consists of various Tales and Poems, ancient and modern. The authors of them are not mentioned; but one of the Poems is ascribed by an older MS. (that of the Dean of Lismore) to Conal son of Edirskeol. The Poem that seems to be the best, is a very pathetic one which was composed on occasion of Archibald Earl of Argyll being imprisoned in the Castle of Edinburgh about the year 1680.

This MS. was written at Aird-Chonail upon Lochowe in the years 1690 and 1691, by Ewan Mac Lean for Colin Campbell, as several dates upon it bear; one of which, taken from the first page of its 79th leaf, is as follows:

Eogan Mac Ghilleoin—Le mo laimh do criochnuidh in eachdrasa da sgriobhadh in seachdmadh la don mhios Mhairt aon mhile se ced aondeg ceithre fithid dannaladh ar ttighearna Iosa Criosd.

Caillain Caimpbel leis in leis in leabharan .i. Caillain mac Dhonchai mhic Dhughil mhic Chaillain oig.

The meaning of which is this:

Ewan Mac Lean—By my hand was finished the writing of this story the seventeenth day of the month of March, one thousand six hundred ninety and one of the era of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Colin Campbell is the owner of this book, namely, Colin, son of Duncan, son of Dougal, son of Colin the younger.

The next Manuscript to be noticed was given to the Society by Lord Bannatyne. It bears no date in its text;

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but the cover of it has the following date in a modern hand, though black letter. "Gleann Masain an cuige la deag do an ... Mh ::: do bhlian ar tsaoirse Mile da chead, trichid sa hocht." That is, Glen Masan, the 15th day of the ... of M :::; of the year of our Redemption 1238. The date being so particular, must be thought to have been taken from the MS, itself when it was more entire than it is now, for it is greatly mutilated. Glenmasan, where it was written, is a valley in the district of Cowal, which, with Glenurchay and Gleneiti, two other vales of Argyllshire, is celebrated in the passage to be presently quoted from it, as the scene in which the sons of Usnoth followed the chace.

It appears from a note on the margin of its 15th leaf, that it formerly belonged to the Rev. William Campbell, minister of Kilchrenan and Dalavich, who was a native of Cowal, and to whom it may perhaps have descended from his grand uncle Mr. Robert Campbell in Cowal, an accomplished scholar and poet, who wrote the eighth address prefixed to the Archæologia of Mr. Edward Lhuyd.

It consists of some mutilated tales in prose, interspersed with verse. One of them regards the tragical story of Deardir, Dearduil, or Darthula, and the three sons of Usnoth, Naos, Ainle, and Ardan, from which the following extract is made, and a *fac simile* exhibited in Plate III. No. 4. down to the eighth line of the verse, to enable such as are curious on this head to form a judgment of the age of the MS.

Do dech Deardir ar a hélse ar crichibh Alban.....agus ro chan an Laoidh—Of which the English is as follows:

Darthula looked behind her towards the land of Albion†, and raised the strain—

† *i. e.* Scotland.

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Inmain tir in tir ud thoir
Alba cona lingantaibh
Nocha ticfuinn eisdi ille
Mana tisain le Naise.
Inmain Dun Fidhgha is Dun Finn
Inmain in Dun os a cinn
Inmain Inis Draignde
Is inmain Dun Suibnei.
Caill cuan gar tigeadh Ainnle mo nuar
Fagair lim ab bitan
Is Naise an oirear Alban.
Glend Laidh do chollain fan mboirmin caoimh
Iasg is sieng is saill bruich
Fa hi mo chuid an Glend laigh.
Glend masain ard a crimh geal a gasain
Do nimais colladh corrach
Os Inbhar mungach Masain.
Glend Eitchi ann do togbhus mo ched tigh
Alaind a fidh iar neirghe
Buaile grene Ghlind eitchi.
Mo chen Glend Urchaidh
Ba hedh in Glend direach dromchain
Uallcha feara aoisi ma Naise
An Glend Urchaidh.
Glend da ruadh
Mo chen gach fear da na dual
Is binn guth cuach
Ar craeib chruim
Ar in mbinn os Glenndaruadh
Inmain Draighen is tren traigh
Inmain Auichd in ghainimh glain
Nocha ticfuin eisde anoir
Mana tiquinn lem Inmain*.

* Extracted from p. 3. col. 1.

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Lovely land is that eastern land,
Albion with all its lakes,
O that I might not depart from it!
But I depart with Naos.
Lovely is the tower of Fidga, and the tower of Fingal.
Lovely is the tower above them.
Lovely the isle of Drayno,
And lovely the tower of Suvno.
But, alas! the wood, the bay, which Ainle would approach,
Are left by me and Naos for ever
Upon the coast of Albion.
O vale of Laith! would I were sleeping by its soothing murmur!
Fish and venison, and the choice of the chace prepared,
Would be my repast in Glenlaith.
Glenmasain! high grow its herbs, fair wave its branches,
Steep would be the place of our repose
Over the grassy banks of Masan.
O vale of Etha! where a first house has been built for me,
Delightful were its groves, when the sun risen to his height
Would strike his beams on Gleneiti.
How I long for the vale of Urchay!
Straight vale of the fairest hills;
Joyful were his companions around Naos
In Glenurchay.
Vale of Daruadh!
Pleasant to me would be each of its people:
Sweet is the note of the cuckoo
From the bending tree of the mountain
Above Glen-da-Ruadh.
Lovely is Drayno of the sounding shore!
Lovely is Avich of the brightest sand!
O! that I might not depart from it west.
But I depart with my love!

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The most valuable of the ancient MSS. procured by the Society, were got from the late Mr. John Mackenzie of the Temple, Secretary to the Highland Society of London. One of these is a large collection of poems composed at various periods, which appears to have belonged to the Rev. James Mac Gregor, Dean of Lismore in Argyllshire. For on the lower margin of its 27th page (as now numbered by its remaining contents) is written Lliber Dñi Jacobi Mk Grigor Decani Lismorẽn. Part of it was written in the year 1512. as appears from the concluding lines of its 144th page.—" Duncha- mac Dowle vic Oyine reywich di sgreyve so a loywrow schenchyth nyn reig· A° Domin. millesimo quin^mo duodecimo." Which means in English, Duncan—son of Dougal, son of Ewan the grizled, wrote this out of the books of history of the kings in the year of our Lord 1512. Part of it was written as late as 1527, which closes an obituary (commencing 1077) of the kings of Scotland, and other eminent persons of the nation, more especially, those of the shires of Argyll and Perth.

The writer of this MS. rejected the ancient character for the current handwriting of the time, and adopted a new mode of spelling conformable to the Latin and English sounds of his own age and country, but retained the aspirate mark (·). Plate III. No. 5. shews a *fac simile* of the title and first six lines of a poem copied from it into the preceding Report, p. 93.

The Welsh had long before made a similar change in their ancient orthography. Mr. Edward Lhuyd recommended it, with some variation, in a Letter to the Scots and Irish prefixed to his Dictionary of their language in the Archæologia Britannica. The Bishop of Sodor and Man observed it in the devotional exercises, admonition, and catechism, which he published for the use of his diocese. It was continued in the Manx translation of the Scriptures, and it has lately been adopted by Dr. Reilly, titular Primate of Ireland, in his TAGASG KREESTY, or

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Christian Doctrine. But yet it must be acknowledged to be much inferior to the ancient mode of orthography, which has not only the advantage of being grounded on a knowledge of the principles of grammar, and philosophy of language, but of being also more plain and easy.

This volume of the Dean's is curious, as distinguishing the genuine poetry of Ossian from the imitations made of it by later bards, and as ascertaining the degree of accuracy with which ancient poems have been transmitted by tradition for the last 300 years, during a century of which the order of bards has been extinct, and ancient manners and customs have suffered a great and rapid change in the Highlands.

In the number of bards who assumed the story of Ossian's heroes for their subject, and attempted his manner, is Muireach Albanach, who must have flourished towards the close of the 13th century; for the fourth in descent from him pronounced the Prosnacha catha, or *Incitement to battle*, on the field of Harlaw the 25th July 1411, as is shewn by a Genealogy which Niel Mac Vuirich wrote in Benbecula the 11th July 1775, for the late Dr. Walker, professor of natural history in the University of Edinburgh. Among these imitators, Ailen mac Ruairi, or Allan son of Rorie, is easily distinguished as the most successful in poetic imagery and harmony of numbers. Yet it is obvious that he could not attain either the simplicity or majesty of his model.

Some of the more ancient poems in the MS. under consideration are altogether, or nearly, the same with what appear in another Collection belonging to the Society, which was made by Mr. Duncan Kennedy from oral tradition five and twenty years ago*; and others of them agree with pieces received from different parts of the Highlands and Isles, where they were likewise taken down from oral recital.

* See p. 273.

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The test which such an agreement affords, at a distance of almost 300 years, of the fidelity of tradition, cannot but seem curious to such as have not had an opportunity of observing the strength which memory can attain, when unassisted by writing, and prompted to exertion by the love of poetry and song. With this view the following instances are given:

1. A poem by Conal son of Edirskeol (p. 205 of our MS.) nearly agrees with one in Kennedy's Collection, p. 69. Some of the names are different, and the sentences are not all in the same order. The four last stanzas but one of Kennedy's copy, are entirely wanting in this. They are superior to the general tenor of the poem, which exhibits a singular mixture of barbarous revenge and generous sentiment.

The same poem appears with a few lines more or less, and a slight variation of words and arrangement in the last of the Kilbride MSS. (*Fol.* 83.) above noticed, and in two several editions communicated to the Society, the one by Robert Campbell Esq. advocate, from the recital of an old man in Ila, and the other by Mr. Malcolm M'Donald, Tarbert, from the recitation of Donald Mac Callum in Kilcalmonell of Kintire.

2. A poem by Ossian (p. 220.) on the failure and fall of Dayro borb, son of the King of Sora, differs very little from Kennedy's and other oral editions in the possession of the Society, in which the hero's designation, however, is Mayro borb.

The four concluding verses which are given by our MS. as a separate reading, are omitted in some of the oral editions, and retained in others. Kennedy's edition has twelve lines (being the 3d and 4th stanzas of his 24th page, and the 3d stanza of his 25th) which are not in the Dean's, and seem to have originally belonged to a different poem.

3. A poem by Ossian (p. 63.) descriptive of a chace, the most successful that Fingal was ever engaged in, corre-

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sponds almost exactly with *Sliabh nam beann fionn* in Kennedy's Collection, p. 29. The number of verses is the same in both, and even the order of them, with two exceptions which do not alter the sense. Some variation occurs in the reading at the 20th, 36th, 44th, and 48th verses. It is observable, that the argument or preface of this piece, as given by Mr. Kennedy, makes the number of hunters 3000, whereas the poem, written in his own hand, has only 1900, which corresponds with the MS. of the Dean. Mr. Kennedy's arguments, indeed, are frequently at variance with the poems to which they are prefixed; a mistake that may have probably resulted from a disposition in the reciter to exaggerate the subject of the poem in his preliminary account of it.

A less perfect edition of this beautiful poem is also found under the title of *La mor Seilg na Feinne*, in the oral recitations communicated by the Rev. Francis Stewart, minister of Craignish; and another still more corrupted, was written from memory by Archibald M'Callum, and communicated through Mr. Malcolm M'Donald.

4. A poem by Fearghas Fili (p. 230) being the report which that bard made to Fingal of Oscar's having fallen on the field of Gavra, corresponds very much with an edition of Kennedy's (p. 148), and another of Mr. Malcolm Mac Donald's; neither of which is inferior to the Dean's. The two last lines of the following stanza are even more happily expressed in Kennedy's edition than in his.

Chunnaic e righ Eirean
Shios ar làr a chatha
Is thug ruathar chuige
Mar bhuinne re càraig.

It is to be observed, that this report of Fergus the bard appears in the editions of Mr. M'Donald and Kennedy, as

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part of a poem on the death of Oscar. So that, notwithstanding our MS. ascribes it to Fergus, it should seem to have been generally considered as a genuine composition of Ossian, in which Fergus was introduced as reporting the disastrous issue of *Cath Ghabhra* to Fingal, in the poem which relates the cause, and consequences of the death of Oscar.

5. A poem by Allan Mac Rorie on the subject of Diarmad's death, corresponds in a great measure with one taken down from oral recital in Sutherland, and another in Ila; the first communicated by General Mackay, and the second by Robert Campbell Esq. advocate. But both the oral editions are imperfect in their contents, and irregular in their arrangement, and the Ila one has an interpolation of *Guach Fhinn*, which is sometimes found engrafted on the genuine Diarmad of Ossian.

6. Another by the same on the subject of Oscar's death, agrees, with some variation in words and arrangement, with one transmitted by Mr. M'Lagan from oral recital, in as far as this last extends, which is little more than half the length of our MS. edition.

7. A poem (p. 236) on the death of Conloch, by Gillecallum mac yn ollaig, that is, Gilcolm, or Malcolm, the son of the physician, agrees very much with one got from Ila as above, and with another published by Miss Brooke*. The Ila copy begins in the same way as our MS. one. In Miss Brooke's, the first eight verses of the former, and the first twelve of the latter, are wanting.—The whole three vary in the order; and both Miss Brooke's and the Ila edition are continued beyond the conclusion of the MS. one.

8. A poem (p. 301) on the death of Fraoch by a lady of the name of Mackeich, differs very little from Mr. Jerom Stone's edition inserted above, and still less from Mr. Gil-

* Reliques of Irish Poetry, p. 265, &c. 268.

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lies' Collection (p. 107.) or from the specimen of the original annexed to Dr. Smith's translation of Fraoch.

9. A poem (p. 85.) whose author is not named, which represents four wise men as conversing at the grave of Alexander the Great the day after he was buried, differs but in nine words from one of Ronald Mac Donald's Collection (p. 133.) printed Edinburgh 1776.

Of the MSS. received from Mr. Mackenzie the oldest is that which is marked *Emanuel*, Mr. Astle having ascertained it to be a writing of the 9th or 10th century.* The following extract from it will not only throw light on the state of classical learning in Scotland in ancient times, but show the care with which its language was then cultivated, and prove how faithfully it has been transmitted in purity, from age to age, down to the present time.

[Táinig Curio do] reimsgudh agus dárd dechsain i tulaigh uraird bui oscind ind longphuirt. Benut Shlebhe moir agus garbh all clochda agus caircci cendgarbha imdha oss in tulaigh sin. Ba huraibhiud iaromh ant Shaidh sin agus badh ingna farcsena is in tir uile e. Ro gabh Curio ic reaghadh o cach carraic dar aile ann co torradh aoen fher do lucht ni tiri in a dhóchum. Saighis Curio coir comhraidh fair, agus frecrais int óclaoech Affraeda e. Anbh fhuil senchas nan dind agus na cnoce agus na cathrach leat? far Curio. Ata umoro amhail ro fhacsat arn Aithri agus ar sean aithri occaind, far ant oglaoech.

Caidh i ainm na tulcha sa i tam? far Curio, agus ca hainm na carcisea far ar cul? Carrac Anteuis ainm na carrci tran ar int óclaoech, agus tulach na gleacca ainm na tulchasa i tái. Cidh ni da fillit na hainmanda sin fortho far Curio. Mur bhadh emilti leatt ro indiafeind duit uili

* Origin and progress of writing, p. 123. and engraved fac simile, plate 29.

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dó lér; far ind tóclaoech Affracda. Innis com min, ar Curio. Curaidh ingnadh bui isin tirsea (ol se) gan athair, cen mhathair daoenna acca, acht a chenemhain a crisluch in Talaimh cheana .i. Antéuus mac Terrae a ainm. Ba mor umoro neart an fhir sin: uair ni cuimgeadh duini no daini cuibhleng fris; agus an nuair thiceadh dith neart do, nus leceadh na laighi fri lár. O na thadhladh, umoro, a thaoebh san in Talamh, thioeadh a neart fen do, agus no linta do calmatus dearmair é o mhathair bunaidh .i. on Talmain. Uair ní licedhsom a leas co minic sin itir; ár ni foghgbaith ea neach no fhuilgnedh a neart cheana. A torcratar accaidi ni tiri leis, agus nach long no taidhladh in cuansa this, ni thindtadh slan uadh, gur ro fhasaighedh in fearannsa uili dó nach lamhtha a thadhall do mhuir no dó thír. O ro fhasaighedh an tir immisomh, ba tuara dó feoil oss agus fhiadh, mhíl agus mhathghamhain agus Leomhan, do neoeh no marbhadh fen iccuairt ind fhassaigh nach dia. Ni bidh taighi, na craibheach na pell no brotrach na brecan fui is in Leapaidh-acht a thaoebh fris in Talamh.*

The English is as follows:

[Curio went to] explore and to view the country from a considerable eminence which overlooked the camp. Behind this hill was a great and rugged mountain, abounding in rocks and massy stones. It was a place exceedingly pleasant, and the view which it commanded was the wonder of the whole land. Curio ran from rock to rock, till he happened to meet a native of the country. Curio requests permission to converse with him; and the African youth returns him answer.—Do you know the history of those forts, hills, and towns? said Curio. I know it, such as our fathers, and our grandfathers, have left it to us; said the young man.—What is the name of this hill that I

* Extracted from page A. Col. 1. 2. and A. A. Col. 1.

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am on? said Curio—And what do they call that rock behind us? The rock of Anteus they call that rock, said the young man; and the hill of Wrestling is the name of this hill that you are on. From what cause are they so named? said Curio. If it be not tedious to you, I shall tell it at full length, replied the African lad. Tell it minutely, said Curio.—There was (said he) a wonderful champion in this land, who had neither father nor mother of human kind, having been produced from the womb of earth herself. Anteus son of Terra was his name. Great indeed was the strength of that person; for neither one man nor many could contend with him, because when his strength failed, he would let himself down to the ground, and as soon as his side touched the earth, he was filled with wondrous vigour from his proper mother the earth. Yet he rarely needed this resource. For none was found who could resist his strength. The inhabitants of the land fell by him, and no ship that entered the port below could retire in safety from him: so that he wasted the whole of this country, and none dared to approach it either by sea or land.

After the country around him became a wilderness, his subsistence was the flesh of moose, and deer, beasts of prey, bears, and lions, which he daily killed in the wilderness.

He had neither rushes, nor branches, nor skin, nor rug, nor tartan plaid,* for his bed—but his side to the ground.

This ancient author appears to have had the following passage of Lucan in his eye:

[Curio]—Castra locat cano procul æquore, qua se
Bagrada lentus agit siccæ sulcator arenæ.

* The original word, *breacan* is the well known plaid of the Caledonians, which supplied them with a dress by day, and a covering at night.

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Inde petit tumulos, exesasque undique rupes,
Antaei quæ regna vocat non vana vetustas.
Nominis antiqui cupientem noscere causas,
Cognita per multos docuit rudis incola patres.
Nondum post genitos Tellus effeta gigantes,
Terribilem Libycis partum concepit in antris.
Nec tam justa fuit terrarum gloria Typhon,
Aut Tityos, Briareusque ferox: cœloque pepercit,
Quod non Phlegræis Antæum sustulit arvis.
Hoc quoque tam vastas cumulavit munere vires
Terra sui fœtus, quod, cum tetigêre parentem,
Jam defecta vigent renovato robore membra.
Hæc illi spelunca domus: latuisse sub altâ
Rupe ferunt, epulas raptos habuisse leones.
Ad somnos non terga feræ præbere cubile
Adnuerunt, non silva torum: viresque resumit
In nuda tellure jacens; periere coloni
Arvorum Libyes: pereunt, quos adpulit æquor,
Auxilioque diu virtus non usa cadendi,
Terræ spernit opes: invictus robore cunctis,
Quamvis staret, erat *.

What remains of this MS. is but part of a considerable work on ancient history, written on the authority of Greek and Roman authors, and interspersed with notices of the arts, armour, manners, dress, superstition, and usages of the Scots of the author's own time.

Though the whole of this interesting work be still extant, there is nothing from the beginning to the end of it, that gives the most distant hint of the name or condition of its learned and eloquent author. It can be merely inferred from his work that he wrote after Orosius, and before Bede, or between the 5th and 8th centuries.

* Pharsalia, Lib. IV. v. 587,—609.

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It is, however, worthy of remark, that a chapter of this ancient work, which is entitled "Sloghs Chesair an Inis Bhreatan," or Cæsar's Expedition to Britain, contains the following notice concerning Lochlin, a country so often mentioned in our ancient poems and tales.

"Cæsar—thainig go leigionibh lán iomdhaibh dóghaibh ainsoire na Headaille leis an gcrúb fhearan na Gaille agus tire leathain fhada Lochlain. Ar is aoin tír ladsan acht edarchuighacht srotha Réin roghlain ag dúnghe agus ag dealughadh na dá fhearan sin."

Which means in English,

Cæsar—came with some entire legions of the ruthless youth of Italy into the rough land of Gaul, and the wide and long country of Lochlin. For these are one and the same country, but for the interposition of the clear current of the Rhine, which divides and sunders the two lands.

Nor should it escape us, that a Welsh treatise, entitled "Y Trioedh Inys Brydain," which was written about the end of the 7th century, according to Mr. Vaughan of Hengurt, who made an English translation of it at the desire of Primate Usher, mentions that "the warlike Irp conducted a fleet to Llychlyn: on which Mr. Edward Lhuyd remarks, that by this name "we understand Sweden, Denmark, and Norway*."

Whence it is evident, that the Rhine formed the western boundary of the ancient Lochlin; and as the term is still understood (both in the Welsh and Gaelic) of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, and all those northern regions mentioned in the works of the bards, it is obvious that LOCHLIN was the same with the Germania of the Romans, which is

* Lhuyd Archæolog. Britann. Tit. VII. p. 264. col. 2.

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known to have reached from the Rhine, eastward, to the Baltic, Weisel, and Gulf of Finland†.

The parchment book, marked No. IV. consists of different MSS. written by different hands, and stitched together in one collection. The oldest of them should seem, from its letter and vellum, to have been written in the 10th or 11th century.

The annexed specimen plate 1. fig. 4. shews its ornamented letter, and plate 3. No. 2. is taken from its Treatise of Peanaid Adhaimh, or Punishment of Adam, Fol. XXIII. rev. col. 1. Aspeart Eua fri h Adum as missi as chintach ar si agus imbir bas fortum a Adaim .i. comad moide do genad Dia troccaire ottrsa. As leor cheana do craidfimut in Coimde ar Adum agus ni dingansa fingal fortsa arse ar atai chema co truag tarnocht agus ni daiffmb mfhuil fein for talmain uair rann dom chorpsa thussa.

That is—Eve spoke to Adam. I am the guilty person, said she, and do thou deal death to me, O Adam, that God may the rather do mercy to thyself! Enough have we already grieved the Godhead, said Adam, nor can I commit murder upon thee. For, said he, thou art already miserable in thy nakedness; and I shall not deliver my own blood to the earth, since a portion of my body art thou.

In the same Collection is an ancient Life of St. Columba, the character of which (very similar to that of Lord Bannatyne's MS. mentioned above) evidently shows it to be of the twelfth or thirteenth century. The following ex-

† Lhuyd Archæolog. Britann. Tit. X. in voc. Lochlonach. Evan's ancient Welsh Bards p. 25, note.

Vetustissimi igitur Germaniæ termini fuere; ab occasu Rhenus amnis, et Oceanus Germanicus;—ab ortu Granvicus et Finnicus sinus, mare Sucvicum, sive sinus Codanus, Vistula amnis, &c. Philp. Cluverii Introduct. in univers. Geograph. Lib. III. c. 1.

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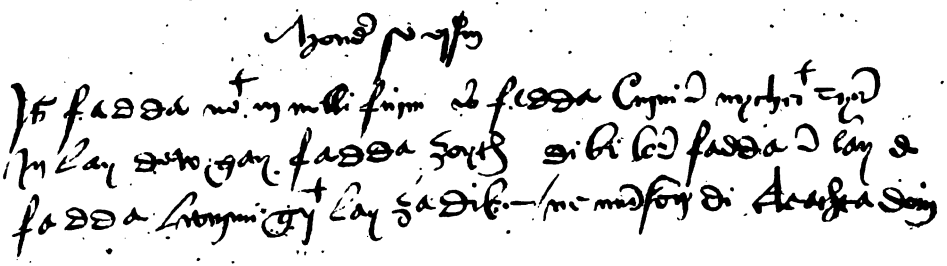
Plate III.

No. 1.

No. 5.



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tract made from Fol. XIII. rev. col. 2. is inserted. plate 3. No. 2.

Luidh iarsnah Columb Cille fecht ann gu Ri Cruithnech .i. gu Bruidhi Mac milcon, agus do dunadh dorus in dunaigh fris, agus do foscuil fo chedoir glais iarnuidhi an baili tre urnaidhthi Cholumb Chille. Tainic iar sin Mac in righ .i. Maelcu agus a Drai do frithtagra fri Columb Cille tre geinn thighecht.

The English is as follows:

After this St. Columba went upon a time to the King of the Picts, namely, Bruidhi son of Milchu, and the gate of the castle was shut against him, but the iron locks of the town opened instantly through the prayers of Columb Cille. Then came the Son of the King, to wit, Maelchu and his *Druid* to argue keenly against Columb Cille in support of Paganism.

A form of letter somewhat ruder, and seemingly later by about a century than the foregoing, marks the last piece in the volume, which is a tale much effaced. It should seem from the following passage of it exhibited plate 3. No. 1. that the isles of Innsehorc, so frequently mentioned in our ancient poems, were considered by the author of it as facing Scythia; which makes it probable that Shetland and Orkney were included in the name, though the modern reciters of tales and poems usually consider it as applying only to the latter.

" A ni noch an fuar an Erin noch and Alain noch and Eoruip noch ind Afraic noch ind Asiaa gona Grecia agus Scitia agus Indsi horc gona Colamnaip Ercail agus Tor m Breogain agus Indsi Gaitule."—That is,

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The thing not to be found in Erin nor Alban nor in Europe nor in Africa nor in Asia, with the compass of Greece and Scythia and Inisi here with the Pillars of Hercules and the Tower of Brecgan and the Isles of Gades. Extract from fol. xxxv. rect. ad notul.

All the Gaelic MSS. in the possession of the Society written from the earliest period till after the 13th century (with the single exception of the Dean of Lismore's volume) are written in the very ancient form of character which was common of old to Britain and Ireland, and which was adopted by the Saxons at the time of their conversion. For the last forty years it seems to have been discontinued in Scotland; the last specimen which the Society have received of it, being a volume of Songs, in which is included one of Duncan Macintyre's,—entitled, *An Tuiteis Mac Neachdain*, which he composed in 1752, between which and the year 1768, it is probable that the volume in question was written, because the first edition of Macintyre's Songs was published in that year.

A Deed of *Fosterage* in this collection between Sir Norman Macleod and John Mackenzie executed in the year 1645 shews that the Gaelic language was not disused in legal obligations at that period.

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No. XX.

EXTRACT

OF A POEM IN MR. D. KENNEDY'S COLLECTION,

CALLED BAS OISEIN,

REPRESENTING THE MANNERS OF FINGAL'S HEROES.

'S TIAMHAIDH bhi noc ann Gleann-caõthann,
Gun ghuth gadhair ann, gun cheol;
Mo chroidhe cho deann e do'mgeir,
'S mi fein an sean fhear gun treoir.
'Nuair reachamaid do Ghleann-caõthann,
Bu bhinn bladhar againn ceol;
B'iomad dea' fheardhinn air chinn,
'S cho toileamaid diomh d'ar deoin.—
'Nuair thogamaid ri Gleann-caõthann,
Bu lionmhor fadhaid gach iul;
A cosgairt an daimh, 's an fheidh,
'S iomad ceud nach eiseadh dhiu.
B'iomad laoch a dh'eighte mach,
A dhireadh gu bras an Sliabh;
Le shleagh, 's i ruisgte na dhonn,
Le cloidheamh mor, agus Sgiath.

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Fionn mo ghaoil is caogad Triath,
Le cheile air grianan ard;
Is Gile-ghreine ri crann,
Os a chionn, a bhratach aigh.
Bu chian ar sgaoileadh o cheile,
Fea' gach sleibh air barra bhac;
Laochrai' chalma, churant Fhinn,
'S am botha gach tiom nan glaic.
'Nuair a dh'eireadh seilg an fheidh,
Dh' fhaasgladhmaid na ceuda cu;
'S ioma' damh, earb, agus Adh,
A thuiteadh sa bhail gach iul.
Philleamaid le'r seilg tre-aon,
Gu Teamhra' cheolmhor nan teud;
Am bu lionmhor cruit is clar,
'S ioma' bard a sheinneadh sgeul.
B'ioma' slige doll mun cuairt,
'S dana nua' ga luadh le cheil;
A' caitheamh na feiste 's ann Tur,
B'aluin, ur na fhlatha feinn.
B'eibhinn nos na feima a ghluais,
Ceolmhor, cuannar, snuadhar, treun;
Fion is fochlas agus feoil,
Speis gu leoir, 's cho b'eol duinn breug.
Na suinn chaomha, chalma, ghraidh,
Bu mhor baidh, 's bu chian an cliu
Feileachd, furan, 's a bhi dian,
A dhion choitheach, cian o'n iul.
La a chath air magh na bair,
Co, na b'fhearr, cho chualas riamh,
Chomhraigeamaid fear is ceud,
Gach aon fear do'n Fheinn bu Triath.
Cha do ghluais sian riamh d'ar deoin,
Ach gu foil do chomhrag dian;

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An t onrachdan dhion gu treun,
'S an coitheach creuchta f'ar sgia'.
B'e'n t aireamh a bha ri'm linn,
Ann an Teamhra' bhinn nan teud;
Ceithir mfle deug, is caogad,
N'ar cairdean gaoil air bheag beud.
Gun luadh air oglaoich Ri' Phail,
Aosmhoir sharaicht, no mnai' og,
No gillean freasdail nan lann,
Och! Gur fann tha mi fui' bhron.
Siubhail an domhan mu seach,
'S cho'n fhuigh ar ann neach mar Fhionn;
A b' fhearr eineach agus agh,
Cho deachaidh fmh os a cheann.
Ghluais na laoich do'n uaigh gun lo,
Sin a dh' fhag mar cheo mo shuil;
Mar aon ean leointe sa choill,
Gun solas, a'caoi 's a mhur:
Gun leirsin, gun urfhas, gun fhonn,
Mar an Sonn a sguir a dh' fhas;
No mar achnó sa Ghreadhain chrin,
Thun tuiteam a sios golar.
'S neo' eibhinn do'n chroidhe bhroin,
Nach nochdar solas o chaoimh;
Mar fhiadh a bhais tha mo chruth,
Dh'eig mo ghuth le dealt na hoich.

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TRANSLATION.

Mournful it is to be to-night in the vale of Cona,
Without the voice of hound, and without music!
My fancy can no longer accomplish its purpose,
I am truly the old man and the feeble.
When we went to the vale of Cona,
Soft and expressive was the music that accompanied us;
Many were the men of worth among us,
Nor would we willingly incur displeasure.
When we would ascend the paths of Cona,
Numerous were the parties in every direction,
To subdue the hart and the hind,
Many hundreds of which were never to rise.
Many were the heroes, when called upon,
That would rapidly ascend the mountain
With spear exposed in their grasp,
Their great sword and their shield:
While my beloved Fingal and fifty chiefs
Were assembled in the lofty court,
And the sun-beam, set to its flag-staff,
Waved over them its victorious banner.
Far would disperse asunder,
Through the steep banks of each mountain,
The strong, adventurous band of Fingal,
With bows ready in their grasp.
When the deer began to start,
We let slip the hundreds of our hounds;
Many a hart, roe, and hind
Fell, as far as I could view.
We returned in the evening with the spoils of the chase,
To Taura of the musical strings,
Where frequent our cruits and harps,

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And many were the bards to sing the tale.
Many a shell went round,
Many were the new songs which were sung together:
Whilst the feast was consuming in the tower:
Beautiful and young the Fingalian heroes,
Joyful in their accustomed course;
Musical, elegant, comely, valiant,
With wine, the reward of valour, and meat;
Much beloved, unused to falsehood.
Chearful and happy were the heroes of Fingal,
The heroes, lovely, strong and friendly,
Of great compassion and extensive fame,
Who were generous, hospitable, and ever eager
To protect the stranger at a distance from his abode.
In the day of battle, on the field of strife,
Mightier men never were seen.
We would engage a man and a hundred,
Each Fingalian hero who was a leader.
We never moved but with reluctance
To give the impetuous battle,
To give the forlorn the protection of valour,
And the wounded stranger the shelter of our shield.
The numbers that were in my time
In Tara of the sweet sounding strings
Were fourteen hundred and fifty,
Of our dear friends without blame,
Without mentioning the young king of Phail,
Nor yet the wounded, the aged, or young women,
Nor the young men that waited on the swords;
Alas! weak am I with grief,
Travelling the world to and fro,
And cannot find one person in it like Fingal.
In generosity and good fortune
None was ever found to surpass him.

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The heroes have gone to the grave
That sees not day,
Which has caused mine eye to be in mist.
I am like the lonely wounded bird of the wood,
While I mourn without ceasing in the hall,
Without sight, or offspring, or cause of joy.
I am like the tree whose growth has ceased,
Or like the nut in its withered husk,
Ready to drop down to the ground.
Grievous it is to the sorrowful heart,
That it cannot derive relief from friends.
Like the dying hart is my form,
My voice sinks under the dew of night!

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No. XXI.

COMPARISON OF POEMS,

WHICH APPEAR UNDER THE SAME TITLE IN MISS BROOKE'S COLLECTION AND MR KENNEDY'S.

THERE are but three poems in the collection of Miss Brooke which have any connection with those of Kennedy's.

I. CONLOCH. The story on which this poem is founded, is the same in both collections, as is likewise the catastrophe; but, excepting these, and twenty-nine lines of poetry, which have a close affinity, they have nothing else in common. These lines are as follows:

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From Miss BROOKE's *Collection.*

A laimh is treise gan teibeadh re neach
Fuasghail h oide, & é ccuibhreach
An tan chualaidh Cuhulinn na lann
Eigir agus cuibhreach Chonuill
An curaidh do budh tréine lámh
Teid ag buain sgeala don macaimh.
p. 266. two last lines, and p. 267. four first.

Is me Conláoich mac na Con
Oighre díleas Dhúnadealgan
Is me an rén sé fíaghnuis ann hunsinn
An dun sgathaigh is tu ag foghluim.
p. 267. last stanza but one.

Mo mhallachd air mo mathair
Os sí chur mise fa gheasaibh
Agadsa a Chuchullin
Aig feuchain le do chleasaibh.
p. 268. first stanza.

Mar chím airm an laoich
Sgiath agus lann Chonlaoich
Is marsin do bhímse ag caoi
Mar fhear gan mhac gan mhnaoi.
p. 268. l. 21-24.

Maith do Laoghuire bhúadhach.
p. 269. l. 17.

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From Mr KENNEDY'S *Collection.*

A lamh threun gun eagal roi neach
Cuimhnich t oide is e ann cuibhreach
An uair a chuala Cu nan cleas
An luaidh sin ar cuibreach Chonail
Ghluais an laoch le neart is danachd
A thabhairt sgeula don choimheach.
p. 82. l. 3, 4. 9-12.

Gur mi Conlaoch mac Cuchulain
Oighre dligheach Dhun-Dealgain
Is mi'n rún ad'fhag tu am bruid
An dun sgathaich ga m'ionnsach.
p. 86. last stanza.

Ri gur diombach mise 'm mhathair
Oir si chuir ormsa na geasan
Is a chuir mi do fheuchain m' fhulaing
Riutsa Chuchulain nan cleasan.
p. 87. third stanza.

Tha claidhmhean is sgiath Chunlaoich
Thall air an réidh a sior dhealra
Mi ga'n caoidh ma seach mar sin
Bhi gun chaomh gun mhac gun bhrathair.
p. 88. last stanza.

Gur maith do na Loithre buadhach.
p. 89. l. 1.

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Nach é do fúair mur bhall gona
In sgiath chorcra, no in lannsa.
p. 269. two last lines.

Truagh nach ann san Mumhain mhaighridh
No Laighnibh na lann bhfáobhrach
No an Crúachuin na mborb laoch
Do thuit mo Chonlaoch caomhsa.
p. 270. first stanza.

Da marbhthaoi thu a teagmail
'Sa-n Espain nó sa-n Isbeirnn.
p. 270. l. 13, 14.

No ancrich Saxan na sáor slógh
p. 270. l. 15.

Os ro mhaith dh fhearaibh Alban.
p. 270. l. 22.

TRANSLATION OF THE PASSAGES IN MISS BROOKE.

O strongest arm, overcome by none,
Release your foster-father from his fetters.
When Cuchullin of swords heard
The distress and the binding of Conal,
That champion of mightiest arm
Went to procure his story of the youth.

I am Conlach, son of Cu,

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Nach é fhuair mar sheud ghoinie
An sgiath chorcair, is an lann so.
p. 89. l. 7, 8.

'S truagh nach ann a Muthann Laithre
N'an Laithne nan lanna caola
No 'sna Cruachana beaga bladhór
A thuiteadh mo Chiunlaoch caomhsa.
p. 89. fourth stanza.

'S truagh nach ann an Criochaibh Eadailt
Anns na Beaga no san Isbein.
p. 89. l. 9, 10.

Nan tuiteadh tu ann an Sagsan.
p. 89. l. 17.

Gur fearr do uaislibh nah Alban.
p. 89. l. 2.

TRANSLATION OF THE PARALLEL PASSAGES IN KENNEDY.

O mighty arm that fearest none,
Remember your foster-father in fetters.
When Cu of the warlike sports heard
That report of Conal being bound,
The hero moved with strength and boldness
To get his story of the stranger.

I am Conlach, son of Cuchullin,
Lawful heir of Dundalgan;

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Rightful heir of Dundalgan *;
I am the pledge which you left in the womb,
When you were learning in Dunscaich *.

My curse be on my mother,
Since she laid me under engagements,
Which made me practise feats of arms
Against you, O Cuchuillin.

When I behold the arms of the hero,
The shield and the sword of Conlach,
I am such in lamenting,
As a man without son or spouse.

Well it is for the victorious Laoghaire
That he did not win, as an instrument of destruction,
This red shield or this sword.

Alas! that it was not in Munster of plains,
Or in Leinster of edged swords,
Or in Cruachan of the fierce warriors,
That my beloved Conloch fell.

Had you been killed in battle,
In Spain or in Hesperia,
Or in the land of Saxons, of free people,

It is exceeding well for the men of Albion.

* Dundealgan is the ancient name of Dunkeld, a well known town of the county Louth in Ireland; and a place in the Isle of Sky still retains the name Dunscaich.

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I am the pledge which you left abroad,
To be educated in Dunscaich.

Much am I offended with my mother,
Because she laid engagements on me,
And sent me to make trial of my skill in arms
With you, O Cuchullin of warlike exercise.

The swords and the shield of Conlach
Are ever glittering yonder on the plain,
And I lamenting them,
Being without friend, or son, or brother.

Well it is for the victorious Loithre people
That he did not win, as a relic for destruction,
This red shield and sword.

Alas! that it was not in Munster of Laithre,
Or in Leinster of pointed swords,
Or on the little flowery Cruachans,
That my beloved Cunlach has fallen.

Alas! that it was not within the limits of Italy,
In the Bega, or in Isben—
Had you fallen in the country of the Saxons.

It is still better for the nobles of Albion.

The last six lines but two, and the third which immediately precedes them, shew Miss Brooke's to be the more genuine, all the names being perfectly correct in hers, whereas in Kennedy's they are, with three exceptions, totally devoid of meaning. It will also appear, from a perusal of the whole poem as given by Kennedy in 444 lines, that the 29 now quoted did not originally be-

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long to it, inasmuch as they have not the same intimate connection with its context which they have with that of Miss Brooke; which, though it be made up of two separate pieces, contains but 184 lines in all.

This accomplished translator observes, in her advertisement to the poem of Conloch, that she cannot "ascertain the exact time in which it was written." And she gives us to understand (p. 23.), that her original consists of two distinct and separate pieces; of the last of which she had "seen a number of copies, all in some degree differing from each other, and none of them connected with the first, except in this one copy which she got from Mr O'-Halloran."

This account agrees with the evidence which is furnished by the MSS. of the Committee; for the first of the pieces appears, with no great variation, in the dean of Lismore's MS., which ascribes it to Gillecalum mac in Ollai', or Gilcolm, the Son of the Physician; and the second is found, with a good deal of difference, in the MS. collection of Edmond M'Lachlan, dated 1630; but the author of it is not mentioned: Nor does it seem to be possible, as the fair critic has observed, to ascertain the age of either piece, since tradition and history, for ought that yet appears, have lost all remembrance of Gilcolm, and his continuator still remains to be discovered.

The composition of the former bears the designation of *Ursgeal* in the MS. of the dean; which term, as Dr Smith has strictly rendered it (Gall., Antiq. p. 151.), denotes the "later tales," which were composed in imitation of, and too frequently interpolated with, the more ancient poems.

One passage of the continuation gives room to conjecture, that its author may have flourished before the Pictish kingdom was brought under the Scots sceptre, (A. D. 843.) and while the country of Sora was still known by its an-

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cient name; though it be likewise probable that a poet of a later age may have purposely mentioned the *Picts* and *Sora*, to give an air of antiquity to his imitation.

" Truagh nach igcriocha Cruithneach
Na bhfían fa fuilteach dòrrdha
Do thuitis a óig lúthmhair
No igcrich shulchair na Sorcha."
p. 270. l. 17-20.

Which Miss Brooke translates,

" Why was it not in Sora's barbarous lands
My lovely Conloch fell?
Or by fierce Pictish chiefs, whose ruthless bands
Would joy the cruel tale to tell:
Whose souls are train'd all pity to subdue;
Whose savage eyes unmov'd that form could view."
p. 28.

It is observable, that the three last lines of the English are not warranted, in the least, by the original of the elegant translator, of which a close trauslation is as follows: " Alas, that it was not in the land of Picts, of the bloody and fierce Fingalians, that thou didst fall, active youth, or in the *gloomy* land of *Sora*!" Yet she may have very properly considered them as the best that could be imagined for the purpose of rounding off her stanza.

But, whatever may have been the name or æra of the authors of Miss Brooke's CONLOCH, they are not to be confounded with the composer of Kennedy's edition, which, though defective in some parts, and corrupted in others, is couched in a style that far exceeds it in strain, incident, and diction, and bears the genuine stamp of an early age.

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II. MANOS. The poems which bear this title, in the collections of Miss Brooke and Mr Kennedy, differ very much; for the stanzas of Kennedy's edition, which extend from the 47th to the 49th, from the 52d to the 55th, and from the 62d to the 74th inclusive, are not found, either in part or whole, in the edition of Miss Brooke; though the style and sentiment prove them an undoubted offspring of the ancient Gaelic muse. Of the first six stanzas of Kennedy's edition, four agree with Miss Brooke's, as does nearly the rest of the poem, with the exception of the stanzas above specified, and of the 7th; which last is an address to the Waterfall of Lothan, expressed as follows:

Eas mo chridhe an t eas so shiar,
Eas ma an deana an Fhiann sealg!
Eas èibhin is àille srath
Bu lionor ann lon is dearg!

Waterfall of my delight, which flowest to the westward,
Along whose banks the heroes of Fingal used to hunt!
Waterfall that dost gladden the fairest of dells,
Which abounded with red deer and elks!

The history of the two poems is likewise different. In Miss Brooke's edition, Manos, king of Lochlin, after being disarmed and bound by Fingal, is set free by his generous conqueror, with permission to renew the general fight, or to retire with the vanquished host to his native land. He accepts of the latter proposal with professions of gratitude, and embarks, after pledging his faith that he would never lift an arm against Fingal. The translation of Miss Brooke expresses with elegance the sense and spirit of her original.—Fingal addressing his fettered foe as follows:

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" Since then to me the glory fell
Thy valour to subdue,
My arm shall now thy foes repel,
Nor injure those who sue.

For thou thyself an hero art,
Though fortune on thee frown;
Rise therefore free, and free depart,
With unimpair'd renown.

Or chuse, strong arm of powerful might!
Chuse, Magnus, now thy course:
With generous foes in peace unite,
Or dare again their force.

Better our friendship to engage,
And be in peace ally'd,
Than thus eternal warfare wage,
Defying and defy'd."

" O never more my arm, through life,
Against thee, Finn, shall rise!
O never such ungrateful strife
Shall Mehee's son devise!

And O! that on their hills of snow
My youths had still remain'd,
Nor thus against a generous foe
Unprosperous war maintain'd!

Exulting in their conscious might,
And glorying in their fame,
And gay with spoils of many a fight,
And flush'd with hope they came!

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(O sad reverse! O fatal hour!
In mangled heaps to die!)
Too mighty Erin! to thy power,
Pale victims, here they lie."

Kennedy's edition of the poem goes on to relate, that after the fleet of Lochlin proceeded to sea, the men, abashed at the failure of their enterprize, prevailed upon Manos to alter his course, and steer for the shore they had left, to renew the attack upon Fingal; which counsel proved disastrous in the issue, Manos himself, and most of his people, having fallen in the battle which followed their second landing. This conclusion of the poem will best appear from the original.

'S e comhairle thug na slòigh
Ar Manos mòr na long àigh
Tighin chuig' ar an ais o'n chuan
Go maithibh sluagh Innsefàil.
Thill na laoich nan caogadaibh borb,
Bu mhor an toirm ar an tràigh.
Mar fhuaim tuinne bha gach treud,
Is faram nan ceud ann ar dàil.
Chuir Fionn teachdaire gu luath
Go Manos nan ruag is nan gniomh.
"Càite bheil do mhiomn mòra
Fhir nach cum a choir ach cli."
Fhreagair an Triath gu fiata borb,
Ar am biodh colg anns gach greis,
"Fhàgas iad in deallt an fheoir
Ar an lòn ud siar ma dheas."
Thug sinn an sin deannal cruaidh
Mar nach fac 's nach cuala mi.
Mar theirbeirt teine na nial
Bha gach triath a sgatha sios.

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Mar choille chrìonaich ar ant shliabh
Is an osag dhian ann nan car,
B'amhlaidh slaòhdraich nan sonn
A tuiteam fui 'r bonn 'sa chath.
Thuit Manos, àrman an nan t sluaigh
Mar lèig theine an cuan na sruth,
B'anèibhin iolach nan laoich
Nuair a chualas gach taobh an guth.
Mach o fhear a dh'iarr a sàth
No ghabh a dhìdion fu'r sgèith,
Do chuideachd rìgh Lochlan gu fìor
Cha deachai duine d'a thìr fein.
Bheirimse briatha do m' rìgh
Riamh ann stri nach d' fhuiling tàir
Gu'n do thuit do na seachd cathain
Trian do mhaithibh Innsefàil.

TRANSLATION.

The hosts offered an advice
To the great Manos of successful ships,
To trace back their way upon ocean,
To meet the chiefs of the host of Inisphail.
So the heroes returned by their fifties fierce,
And loud was their noise on the strand.
Like a roaring wave each band advanced.
Fingal immediately dispatched a messenger
To Manos of the victorious pursuits and exploits:
"Where are thy solemn oaths,
Thou man that upholdest faith but with thy left hand?
Fierce and furious answered the chief,
With the wonted frown of his wrath,
"I left them on the dew of the grass,

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In yonder meadow to the south-west."
We then made the impetuous onset,
Such as I have not seen nor heard of.
As a cloud gives out its fire,
Each hero dealt destruction.
As the decayed grove of the mountain
Sinks under the rapid sweep of the whirlwind,
So were the mighty overturned
As they fell under our feet in battle.
Manos, leader of the host, has fallen,
Like a firey meteor in the firth of currents.
Grievous was the cry of his heroes,
When their spreading voice was heard around.
Except a man who sought his peace
Or who took protection under our shield,
None of the followers of Lochlin's king
Returned to his own land.
I declare by my king,
Who was never defeated in battle,
That there fell in our seven bands
A third of the chiefs of Inisfail.

One very remarkable passage occurs in Miss Brookes' edition of Manos, which is not found in Kennedy's, nor in any other of the various editions which have come to the hands of the Committee. It is this,

" Aisling do chonnairc a réir
Ar sa Fáolan fa léor a ceart
Rígh thire nam fear gorm
Gur sgaras a cheann re na chorp."
p. 274. l. 25-28.

" My vision now I call to mind!
(The starting Fallan cry'd)
I dream'd that with the Moorish king
Alone the fight I try'd:

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"At length methought one lucky aim
Struck off his gloomy head;
And thence my soul forebodes our fame,
And sees our glories spread!"
p. 52.

On which Miss Brooke remarks in a note,

"Righ thire na bhfear ngorm.—Literally, 'The king of the country of the Moors.' This seems a strange passage, and I must confess myself unable to conjecture whence it could have taken rise, or what connection there could have been between the Irish and the Moors."

From its being wanting in all the editions that have been received by the Committee, there is reason to regard it as an interpolation: and it is highly probable, that it was made in the ninth century, when the Moorish Mussulmans of Afrioa, after expelling the Goths from the fairest and richest portion of Spain, and reducing the refugee king of Austria to the base condition of furnishing a yearly tribute of a hundred beautiful damsels, proceeded to invade and possess themselves of Sicily (A. D. 828.); whence they sailed to the mouth of the Tiber, and appeared before the gates of Rome (846), where they struck dread and horror into the numerous pilgrims who resorted thither from all the Christian kingdoms of the west. (Volt. Univ. Hist. v. 1. c. 18. Ed. 1777.)

III. MOIRE BORB. Miss Brooke's Moire borb, resembling, in many particulars, Macpherson's *Maid of Craca*, (Fingal, book 3.) differs very little from Kennedy's copy, or from those received from other collectors. *Vid.* particularly the dean of Lismore's MS. (Report, p. 95-99), where will be found a general coincidence with Miss Brooke and Kennedy, and a closer resemblance to Macpherson than is com-

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monly the case; though in this, as in other instances where such an opportunity of comparison occurs, the simplicity and distinctness of narrative in the original ancient poem will be easily contrasted with the general and more ornamented expression of Macpherson's translation. In the dean of Lismore's MS. a different reading explains one passage which puzzled Miss Brooke. Her original is,

"Inghian righ fo tuinn,"

"Daughter of the king under waves;"

which she says, "she did not translate literally, as it was difficult to know what turn to give it." But in the dean of Lismore's MS. and in Kennedy's copy, it stands,

"Inghean righ tir fo thuinn,"

"Daughter of the king of the wave-surrounded land;"

of which the meaning is sufficiently obvious.

Miss Brooke, p. 124.

The catastrophe of the poem in Miss Brooke, different from that of the similar story in Macpherson, where the lady is killed by a shaft from the bow of her pursuer, and Fingal himself revenges her death, by slaying the ferocious *Borbar*, (as Macpherson calls *Moire borb*) is nearly the same as in Kennedy's edition: it includes the fall of Moire borb, killed by Gaul after a severe conflict; the placing of a gold ring on each of his fingers after his death; the Maid of Craca sojourning a year with Fingal; and Gaul remaining six months, getting his wounds cured, under the care of that generous and hospitable king. This last circumstance of Gaul's cure is not in Kennedy, but is found in some other editions of the poem, in the Committee's possession. Fingal's celebrity as a physician is indeed a favourite topic in many of the ancient tales and poems; to his magical cup in particular, are ascribed many wonderful medicinal virtues.

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No. XXII.

THE DEATH OF CARRIL,

A GAELIC POEM;

From the Collection of Mr. Duncan Kennedy, with his Argument prefixed.

ARGUMENT—*literally copied from Kennedy's MS.*

THE manner by which the death of this famous hero was brought about is very tragical, whose story is related traditionally as follows:—Gaul being the most experienced warrior of all the bands of Fingal, and the only one living of the royal race of Clan Moirne, of whom he held command under the famous flag and special advice of Fingal, and who upon all occasions and at all solemnities was honoured and regarded above any man of either clan. Gaul having always occupied the next seat to Fingal, and enjoyed the best and most delicious messes, especially a roast or colop, (called mir-mora) over and above the wont ratio of all the grand bands, created him in his declining years ill will and aversion by the ambitious sons of Fingal, in particular Carril. This mirmora, or rather mircorra, was a favourite mess of

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Fingal and Gaul, which was but a choice colop chopped and mixed with marrow and herb seeds: it is described thus,

Mirmora nan laothan saillè,
Mar struth meal air barach gheugan;
Is greadhainn nan lus ga charadh,
Do Mhomad armann nan geur-lann.

This mirmora and every other reward conferred upon Gaul was claimed by Caril, finding himself the bravest and most accomplished champion among the sons of Fingal, seeing Gaul aged and unfit for distant services, disputed his birth by dint of arms. The invincible Gaul and inveterate Caril entered the lists, and engaged each other in wrestling, whereby they could not decide the cause upon that day, being both equally overcome. The day following they met well clad in armour, furnished with sword and lance (against the persuasion of Fingal), whereby they shewed much courage and bravery, and Gaul gave the decisive stroke to Caril, who has been lamented by Fingal for many days. Gaul fled and hid himself in a cave, full of grief and sorrow, not choosing to rely upon the friendship of Fingal till his days of mourning elapsed. The poem opens at their engagement, and ends by Fingal and the bards lament over Caril's corpse.

I.

BAS CHAIRILL.

1.

ANN tigh-teamhra nan cruite ciuil,
Air dhuinne bhi s' teach mu'n ōl;
Dhuisg an iomar-bhaidh na laoich,
Cairill caomh, is Momad mor.

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2.

Dh'éirich gu spairneachd na Sruinn,
Bu truime no'n tuinn cuilg an cos;
Sroinich an cuim chuinte cian,
'S an Fhiann gu cianail fui' sproclid.

3.

Clachan agus talmhinn trom,
Threachailte le'm buinn san stri;
A' cliarachd re fad an la,
Gun fhios cia dhiu b'fhearr sa ghniomh.

4.

Air madainn an dara mhaireach,
Chuai' na Suinn an dail a cheil;
Cairill cuilgeara, nam buadh,
Agus Goll nan eruai' lann geura.

5.

Dh'iathadh, dh'imiridh, agus thairneadh,
Iad gu naisinnice sa chumasg;
Gu cuidreach, cudramach, gabhaidh,
Bu chian le cach gair am buillean.

6.

Bu mhinig teine d'an armaibh,
'S cothar garbh d'an cneasa geala;
Chuai' an sleaghan righne bhearnadh,
'S an sgiathan gu l'ar a ghearadh.

7.

Thuit Cairill caoin, calma, ceanail,
Gun anail fui'n Chuinne-chrotha:
'S beudach, baolach, borb am buille,
Leag an curaidh sa chruai' chomhrag.

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8.

Mo laogh, mo leanabh, mo ghradhsa
'S truagh a chraidh do bhas an t athair;
Do radh Fionn an aignidh chianail,
Bu truime no ghrian fui' phlathadh.

9.

O Chairill! A mhic, a ruinein!
Dhruid do shuil, is ghlais do dheud-geal;
Ghluais do neart mar osag uamsa,
Chaochail do shnuadh mar bhlā' ghéugan.

10.

Cho'n fhaicear ni 'smo do thighin,
Air an t slighe chum na coi-stri;
Cho mho chluinn mi fuaim do sgeithe,
Ghaoil na'm beum a' teachd do'm chonamh.

11.

'S truagh nach b'ann le ain-neart choimheach,
No Riogh an domhain a bhuailt u;
'S bheirinnse t eiric a Chairill,
O Bhreathanaich nan arm buadhar.

12.

Beannachd dhuit, a Chairill cheutaich,
'S iomad ceud a dhiong thu 'n comhrag;
B'fhad a thriall u, b'fhaide cliu ort,
Ann 's gach iùl ann d'fhuaras eolas.

13.

Bu mhuirneach, misneachail, meanmnach,
Thu'n Tigh-Teamhra measg nan ceudan;
A laoich fhuilichdich san torachd,
Sgeula broin an diu' mar dh'eug u.

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14.

'S truagh nach ann cathan mhilidh,
Leaigt u mhin laoich, nan dual ārbhuidh;
Bhiodh sliochd Chumhaill toirt diu torachd,
Fea' gach roid g'an leon san āraich.

15.

'S tursach, deurach ceol na Feinne,
Caoi' an treun laoich, b eibhinn gaire;
'S tiamhaidh, doilich Fionn ga d'bhrōn,
Nach faicear beo u 'n teach nan armann.

16.

'S dōsgach eug a ghaisgich euchdoil,
Thuit gun t eug-bhail ann sa chumasg;
Mar neul oiche ghluais e uainne,
'S esin an sgeul truagh is cumhainn.

17.

Oighean Shora seinnear bron leo,
A leith an Ogain chaoimh, āillidh,
Mar cheo nam beann tha gach muthainn,
Snitheh, cumhach air lag mharan.

18.

Tha'n laoch araiceil, toirteil, talmhaidh,
Gun iomairt, gun arm, gun uigheam,
'S cumhann, conart, tionad comhnuidh,
Chois an loin,—gur mor am puthar.

19.

Air cuan nan leug, 's cian a ghluaise e,
Air sumainne nathmhunn, cair-gheal;
Ceolmhor, ceileireach 'san leirg;
Re tim seilg a' tathach fan-daimh.

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20.

A laoich, mheidhich, mhuirnich, bhādhaich,
Labhraich, laidir, luimnich, bheimnich;
Mar shruth neartmhor measg namhan,
Soraidh leat a ghraidh nan geur-lann.

TRANSLATION.

In the house of Temora of melodious cruits
As we were engaged in drinking,
Mutual provocation roused to wrath
Carril, the graceful hero, and Momad the great.
The champions rose to wrestle,
Heavier than lead was the pressure of their feet;
Afar was heard the panting of their breasts;
While sad in suspence stood the heroes of Fingal.
Stones and heavy earth
Were dug up by their heels in strife,
Whilst they struggled during the day
Without determining which was the best in deeds of strength.
On the morning of the second day,
The champions engaged again,
Carril of the pointed arms of victory,
And Gaul of the keen tempered swords.
Folded in each other's grasp,
They anxious twined, and pulled and turned,
Till opposing arms to arms in perilous contest,
The sound of their strokes was regretted by all.
Often did fire come from their arms
And wrought foam from their white breasts;
Their tough spears were hacked
And their shields hewn down to the ground.

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Carril, the mild, strong, and elegant,
Fell breathless under the press of valour;
Relentless, fierce, and ruinous was the stroke
Which laid the champion low in the hard fought contest!
"My darling, my child, my love,
Sad is the wound thy death inflicts on thy father!"
Said Fingal with spirit heavier drooping
Than the sun overcast by the sudden cloud of thunder.
"O Carril! thou son of my love!
Closed are thine eyes, locked thy teeth of whiteness,
Thy strength is swept away as by a blast,
Thy beauty is changed as the blossom of branches.
"No more shalt thou be seen
To tread the path to conflict,
No more shall be heard the sound of thy shield,
Thou pride of battles! coming to my aid.
"Would that the overbearing strength of strangers
Or the king of the world had laid thee low!
Then, O Carril! should I avenge thy death
Upon the Britons of victorious arms!
"Blest be thou, O graceful Carril!
Who defeated hundreds in battle.
Thou travelledst far, but farther still did reach thy fame
To every land where thy name was known.
"Chearful, sprightly and enlivening,
In the hall of Temora, among hundreds,
O hero! bloody in the chace!—
Sad to-day is the tale of thy death.
"Would that thou hadst fallen in the battle of warriors,
Fair and gentle hero of the auburn ringlets!
Then would the race of Comhal revenge the injury,

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Marking all their paths with slaughter.
" Tearful, doleful, is the strain of the Fingalians,
Deploring the mighty warrior of pleasant smile;
Mournful, sad, does Fingal lament thee
Who shalt be seen no longer in the hall of heroes!
" Unfortunate was the death of the valiant champion,
Who fell without war, in a duel.
Like a cloud of night he departed from us;
Sad is the tale we are left to mourn!
" The maids of Sora will raise the strain of woe,
On account of the fair and lovely youth;
As the mountain mist is each tender fair,
Dropping tears, as she wails with stifled voice.
" The hero, vigorous, strong and tall,
Is now without motion, arms, or dress.
Narrow and level is the place of thy repose,
On the margin of the meadow—Great is our wound of woe!
" Upon the pebbly strand thou didst constantly move,
On the boisterous, white-foaming ocean;
Musical, melodious in the field,
In the time of hunting the full grown deer.
" O! hero mild, chearful, beloved,
Eloquent, vigorous, active, expert to wound;
Like a strong stream amongst enemies,—
Farewell, beloved of the sharp blades!"

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It is with infinite concern the Committee has to inform the Society of the death of its excellent co-adjutor, Dr D. Smith, who died, after a very short illness, on the very day (22d May 1805) when the last of his labours in its service, the concluding sheet of this Appendix, issued from the press. The Committee has to sympathize with every lover of Celtic literature, on the loss of a scholar and antiquarian, whose extent of knowledge, whose acuteness, and whose industry, have seldom been equalled. Its acquaintance with him, on occasion of compiling this Report, induces the Committee to add another praise, not less juſt, nor less honourable, though of less general concern, in its sincere regrets for the loss of those many virtues and eſtimable qualities (not less estimable for the simple and unassuming manners that accompanied them) which Dr Smith possessed as a man.

FINIS.

Printed by C. Stewart, Edinburgh.

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ERRATA IN THE REPORT.

Page 18, line 12—"But the queſtion," &c. *dele* the points of interrogation through this whole paragraph.
—— 39, — 9—*from* the bottom, *dele* e after Grein.
—— 46, — 8—*for* from indolence, *read* from the indolenee.
—— — — 9—*for* indeſion, *read* indeciſion."
—— 59, line laſt—*for* himſelf, *read* he.
—— 91, — 16—*for* them, *read* it.
—— 93, — 9—*for* nocht, *read* nochd.
—— 126, — 27—*for* Society, *read* Committee.

ERRATA IN THE APPENDIX.

Page 23, line 10—*for* ſockroek, *read* ſococh.
—— 28, — 24—after the word *deal*, inſert *of*.
—— 29, — 11—*for* Mac Caſkie, *read* Mac Caſkie.
—— 38, — 7—from the bottom, *for* cuamail, *read* cumail.
—— 38, ſame line, *for* cuideach, *read* cuideachd.
—— 41, — 2—*for* cleacha, *read* cleachda.
—— 50, — 8—*for* then, *read* there.
—— 64, — 12—*for* Highland, *read* Highlands.
—— 76, — 11 from the bottom, *for* condemned, *read* cohdenſed.
—— 77, — 10—*for* minſter, *read* miniſter.
—— 81, — 12—*for* neas, *read* meas.
—— 82, — 5—*for* mighty, *read* mightly.
—— 82, — 25—*for* i, *read* mi.
—— 88, — 20—*for* 3. *read* 4.
—— 98, — 11—*for* unwearied, *read* unvaried.
—— 112, — 10—*for* Cruchan *read* Cruachan.
—— 125, — 15—*for* ſein, *read* fein.
—— 132, — 6—*for* ever, *read* every.
—— 134, — 21—*for* Bahul, *read* Bachul.
—— 200, — 3—*for* nach, *read* nochd.
—— 200, — 15—*for* ſint, *read* ſinn.
—— 206, — 19—*for* Mailie, *read* Maille.
—— 246, laſt line of note, *for* M'Phad, *read* M'Phail.

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